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Frontispiece.

The Well in the Valley.

Smyth, Thomas.

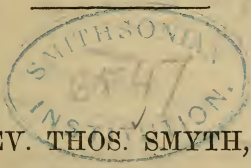
THE

WELL

IN THE

VALLEY.

"Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well."
Ps. lxxxiv. 6.—See Preface.



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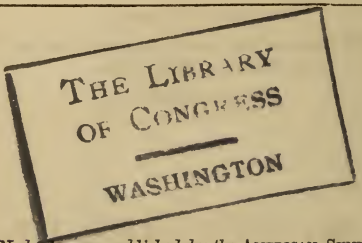

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CHARITY.

Fair form that sittest on the cloud,
  An image of parental love,
And from the purple-folding shroud
  To earth descendest from above,
With babes enfolded in thine arms,
  As sheltering them from worldly harms;
All words are weak to speak of thee,
  And figure thy fair form divinest charity!

How can we paint thee to our eyes?
  Thy brow is like the radiant morn,
Thy flowing robes are azure skies,
  And stars the gems thy robes adorn;
The vernal cloud thy chariot fair,
  The winds the steeds that chariot bear,
And hues of evening clouds that roam,
  Are but the radiant gate that leads unto thy home.

If thus thou'rt fair with God above,
  And fairer than all things below,
Bathed in thy light, immortal love,
  May our hearts burn our footsteps glow;
With emulous haste our feet be shod,
  To love our neighbor, serve our Lord;
His sheep to feed, His lambs to tend,
  Through pastures green their way to wend;
His voice to know, His staff to heed,
  And to His home and banquet lead.
Such actions are the hearts own door,
  Whereby affection comes, and multiplies her store,
Up springing in the Soul with joy for evermore.

CHILDHOOD.

Childhood in God's own temple ever found,
As when the lamps of eve their shadows flung,
And Samuel heard the awful voice profound,
Or when the temple with hosannas ringing,
And Christ was welcomed by the infant tongue!
Yea, Christ Himself is seen a holy child,
Sitting His heavenly Father's courts among.
Then what, O Lord, 'mong men by sin defiled,
Is for thy temple meet as childhood undefiled.

Sweet childhood! shadow of celestial love,
Trained to look up and hold a parent's hand,
And ever lift the eye to one above;
Which knows not yet, while it obeys command,
Hopes all and all believes; Elysian land!
Drinking the air of immortality
It sheds o'er earth a gleam of paradise;
It is a precious sight which angels view,
In trembling joy and hope; immortal love,
Hangs o'er it watching every opening hue,
Since many such on this bad earth may prove,
Meet for God's golden house in highest heaven above.

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PREFACE.

THE WELL IN THE VALLEY! What lovely and attractive pictures do these words present to the imagination! Let us portray one of them.

We behold a most agreeable landscape. Mountains to the North and South, enclose a valley whose land is highly cultivated, and covered with flocks and herds. It is watered by the river Litanus and several other streams, and is a delicious and enchanting country. With a balmy atmosphere and salubrious climate, it is the very place to induce a company of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem to tarry for a night. The fruit-bearing mulberry tree with its lofty branches and broad spreading leaves every where abounds. Interspersed among these are found the palm, the olive, the cedar, the oak, the fir, the sycamore, the chesnut, the willow and other trees which not only add graceful ornament to the landscape, but afford most refreshing shelter from the direct and injurious rays of a tropical sun; contribute essentially to the comfort, and even sustenance of the inhabitants by their abundant fruit; while by their juices they administer cooling and medicinal draughts. Many of these trees flower twice in the season, and bear fruit all the year round. Flowers also

grow in this valley in great profusion and variety. The meadows are adorned in succession by the blossoms of the different species of anemone ranunculus, crocus, tulip, narcissus, hyacinth, lily and violet. These, together with the iris, the almond tree, the cassia, the wild grape, the myrtle, the spikenard, and innumerable daffodils, crowfoots, and jessamines, form an enameled carpet which perfumes the air with the most grateful odors, and thus embalm while they perfect a scene replete with every thing that can gratify the eye, or charm the imagination.

Such was the valley of Baca, alluded to in Scripture, supposing it to refer to that plain (still called Bakaa) which lies in one of the most northern districts whence travellers were accustomed to journey to Jerusalem. This every Israelite was required to do thrice a year, to the three great feasts—the passover, pentecost, and that of tabernacles. These festivals could be celebrated only at Jerusalem which was the mother of all Israelites, the centre and source of all their religious solemnities, the bond of union, and the great leading type of that temple which is not made with hands eternal in the heavens. To prepare for this, all the types and shadows, the sacrifices and oblations of the Mosaic economy were instituted, the means of grace, and the pledge and foretaste of its celestial blessedness. There were then, as now, family religious services, and also public and united worship in the various Synagogues of the land. But these were not enough. To perpetuate the memory of the fundamental facts of their religion; to keep them steadfast in their profession; to hold forth the majesty of divine service and the glory of Israel and Israel's God; to imbue their minds with more profound knowledge and spiritual experience; to consolidate the bonds of peace by a unity of faith, hope

and joy; and above all to constitute special occasions of sacred fellowship and divine blessings; a personal attendance, implying a public profession and solemn communion, was required of all Israelites, three times every year.

It was in this way that believers, under the Old Testament economy of the church, proclaimed their spiritual oneness, not only as one visible church but as bound together in holy covenant and fellowship with Jehovah. This was the very heart and soul of the Mosaic religion. The great end and purpose of every thing about it was to open up the way through the sacrifice and mediation of a coming Saviour, for the restoration of guilty sinners to a sin pardoning God, so that they might find in Him the centre of their being, their only absolute and supreme good, the fountain of all excellence and blessedness, their only proper and satisfying rest,

> And thus bring back,
> Through the world's wilderness long wander'd man
> Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.

To believing and spiritual minds, the dearest place on earth was the sanctuary of God, the courts of Jehovah, God's house. Heart and flesh,—every power and faculty of body and mind—longed for them. When away from them or prevented from repairing to them, such individuals envied the felicity of those who dwelt at Jerusalem, and even the little birds which found shelter and protection around the sacred precincts of God's altars. And while to unbelieving and pleasure seeking hearts the beauty of Baca's vale was more attractive than the dwellings of the Lord of Hosts, pious hearts only made it a highway along which to pass, and a well beside which to refresh themselves, while they eagerly pressed forward to appear before God in Zion.

Those are at home; these journey still
To build their nest on Zion's hill.
Blest! who their strength on thee reclined
Thy courts explore with constant mind,
And Salem's distant towers still view;
With active zeal their way pursue;
Secure the thirsty vale they tread;
While oozing from their rocky soil,
The copious springs their steps beguile,
And bid the cheerless desert smile,
As down in grateful showers distilled
The heavens their kindliest moisture yield;
From stage to stage advancing still,
Behold them reach fair Zion's hill,
And prostrate at her hallowed shrine,
Adore the majesty divine.

Re-union and communion with God has therefore been the great end of true religion from the beginning of the world; and union with His church and communion in its privileges and duties, have ever been the means through which these inestimable blessings have been enjoyed—the well in the valley of life from which weary and thirsty souls have drawn forth the waters of salvation. Such is the order of God's appointed method of salvation and sanctification. The God of ordinances has ever been revealed most sensibly to the hungry and thirsty soul in the ordinances of God. Believers, having spiritual life imparted to them by the Holy Spirit, have ever like new born babes desired the sincere milk, and as they grew in grace the stronger food, supplied by the word and ordinances of God. These have been to them what home and parents, and a well filled storehouse and generous hearted kindness are to the children of loving parents. In the valley of life the church has ever been to such souls, the well-spring of all true personal and social happiness. Around

this they clustered. Here they erected their tents. Here they spread their table in the wilderness and around its board they feasted on the fat things, the bread of heaven and the living water. However distant from it in bodily presence, it was still near to them at heart. Participation in the pleasures of communion, with each other and with God, were their chiefest joy, and to be cut off from them by any insuperable obstacle, their heaviest affliction. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

And such will be the church of God which he purchased with his own blood, and the ordinances of God which at once commemorate and communicate his unspeakable mercies, and the service of God, which is an ever fresh reward in its own sanctifying power and in its ultimate recompense,—ever be regarded by every loving and believing heart.

The world may be to you, dear reader, like the valley of Baca full of beauty and refreshment. But if you are a child of God, you will turn away from all created beauty and all transient joy to Him who is the source of all that is beautiful and desirable in life, and find in Christ and Him crucified, and in that church which he instituted, and of which he is the foundation, your chiefest joy, the home and rest of your soul, the life of your life, the radiance of its beauty and the rapture of its joys. There you will learn to use without abusing the mercies of a generous Father. There you will be taught how to glorify the giver in the enjoyment of his gifts. There you will be disposed to consecrate body, soul and spirit, influence and affluence, time and talents, to Him who hath loved you and given

himself for you. And there you will be enabled so to improve the many blessings intrusted to your use, so as to make to yourself friends who shall receive you into everlasting habitations.

But it is only to the few, and to these few but for a short and uncertain season, that life is so favorable, and the world so charming. To the great majority life is what has been most generally understood by the valley of Baca, a vale of tears, a place of weeping, a dry and thirsty land where no water is, a dreary waste, a thorny road, a weary pilgrimage through a howling wilderness.

Such is the interpretation, anciently and now generally preferred, of the passage selected as our motto, and suggestive of our title. The valley of Baca was probably some dry, desolate valley—the valley of weeping, as it may be literally rendered,—and is employed as a beautiful description of this life, regarded as the vale of tears, clouded by sorrow and destitute of all inward and heart satisfying consolation. As the valley of Baca lay on the route to Jerusalem, a road may have been constructed through it, and a well of capacious size excavated to receive and retain the early and the latter rains. Here then the pilgrims towards Zion would halt. They would make this a stage in their journey—a well where under the cover of some building, analogous to our inns, they would enjoy shade, rest and refreshment. And just what this well in the valley of Baca was to the ancient pilgrims to Jerusalem,—their type of heaven,—such is the church to weary pilgrims now on their journey through this vale of tears. It is a temporary home, a rest, a refuge from the storm, a shelter from the burning rays of the sun, a well of living water, a source of happiness, a fountain of delight.

This is what the church is designed to be, and what it

is to every hungry and thirsty, to every weary and heavy laden soul, which having found peace and joy in believing rejoices in hope of the glory of God. It is what many interpreters have understood by the inn to which in the parable, the wounded traveller was borne that he might be nursed, nourished and restored. Happy, says the Psalmist in the same Psalm, is such a man! His strength is in God! All obstacles are removed out of his way, and an easy and delightful access is opened up for him unto God through the pathless wilderness, of his own sinful, guilty and despairing fears. All his springs are now in Christ, from whom living streams of spiritual health are continually supplied by which he is strengthened, and made fruitful in holiness, and in every good word and work. And as the church is Christ's appointed instrumentality for the administration of ordinances and the communication of spiritual blessings, and especially (as in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper) the nearest and dearest communion with Him possible upon earth—the poor wandering bird to which the Psalmist compares the believer while on earth, finds in it a resting place and home both for itself and its helpless young.

Forth from the dark and stormy sky,
Lord, to thine altar's shade we fly;
Forth from the world, its hope and fear,
Saviour, we seek thy shelter here:
Weary and weak, thy grace we pray
Turn not, O Lord! thy guests away.

Long have we roamed in want and pain,
Long have we sought thy rest in vain;
Wildered in doubt, in darkness lost,
Long have our souls been tempest-tost.
Low at thy feet our sins we lay;
Turn not, O Lord! thy guests away!

To you, then, my dear reader, who art yet in the valley of life, whether it is to you sorrowful or joyful, I would point out this home—the well in the valley—and invite and encourage you to draw near, to abide under the shadow of its sacred walls, and to drink abundantly of its living water. This is the object of my book. It is not a story book, though you will find in it numerous and I hope very interesting stories from real life. I trust you feel your need of true piety and an earnest desire to obtain it. I hope also that you cherish a deep and heartfelt respect for the church, and that you would esteem it a great privilege as it is your most solemn obligation, to be a worthy member of it. As such allow me to take you by the hand and talk with you as Christ did with the woman of Samaria. You are afraid to hope in Christ, to cast yourself upon him as a guilty sinner fully sensible of your weakness of faith and insensibility of heart, and you are afraid to profess religion, because, as you think, you are too young,* or too unworthy, and because you might afterwards fall away and disgrace your high calling. Perhaps like the Psalmist you may realize how amiable are God's tabernacles, and how goodly are the tents of Jacob. Your soul may long and faint for the courts of the Lord. You may even envy those that are already dwellers on Zion, who come up with joy to its solemn feasts, who go on their way rejoicing and have songs of gladness put into their mouths in the house of their pilgrimage. You may often ask yourself the question, Ought I to join the church? and think that you would rather be a worthy doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell at ease amid the tents of wickedness.

* John Wesley was a communicant in his father's church at the age of eight.

Allow me then to guide you to this happiness, this freedom from inward cares, this quiet peace of mind, this gladness and contentment of spirit. I would rejoice to be able to remove your fears and doubts by presenting to you the fulness, freeness, and sufficiency of Christ for pardon, peace, holiness and perseverance even unto the end; and the adaptation of his church to supply strength, confidence, and comfort, and constantly renewed vigor to enable you to proceed from stage to stage through this valley of weeping, until you appear before God, as a spirit of the just made perfect in heaven.

A story is told of a tribe of Indians who fled from a relentless foe in the trackless forest in the southwest. Weary and travel worn they reached a noble river which flowed through a beautiful country. The chief of the band stuck his tent pole in the ground and exclaimed :— "Alabama! Alabama!" "Here we shall rest! Here we shall rest!"

Come then, thou wearied and foot-sore pilgrim, into this peaceful valley and there find Him who once tarried at the well of Jacob, and in the fulness of his imparted peace and joy, and descending like dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass, you will be constrained with all his true followers to say, "Here we shall rest. Here we shall rest."

Come, listening spirit come!
  Good angels guide thy way;
Our Shepherd bids thee to his fold,
  The gracious call obey.

No more the cold gray stone
  His sepulchre doth seal;
'Tis rolled away—our Lord is risen;
  He stoops our wounds to heal.

Come, waiting spirit, come!
His hallowed board is spread;
Turn from the false delights of earth,
And take the living bread;

And in that strength Divine,
Pass on thy pilgrim way;
Make him thy pole-star through the night,
Thy sunbeam all the day.

And guard with faithful hand
The promise of his love,
To share his banquet here below,
And be his guest above.

A WORD WITH MY READERS.

My dear Reader—If your minister, or some small thread of providence, has led you to take up this volume, I hope you will allow me to introduce myself to you as a friend. You are a man or a woman, young, full grown, middle-aged, or advancing in years. As such, you have a soul to be saved or lost. This matter must be soon determined, finally and forever. In the midst of life you are in death, and with death the day of your merciful visitation closes, and the night cometh in which no man can any more work out his own salvation, because there is no more any place for repentance, and because God no longer worketh in any heart to will and to do.

I take it for granted that you believe and realize these momentous truths. I hope you have very carefully and prayerfully read that most valuable book recently issued by this Society, "The Great Question, or will you consider the subject of Personal Religion?" If so, you

feel, as I presume you do, an anxious desire to know the way of God more perfectly. You cannot but feel that in order to be a Christian there is much for you to DO, as well as much for you to know, and experimentally to feel.

"The Church of the living God, which He purchased with His own blood," exists. It has existed always, from the very beginning of time. It is the kingdom of light, in contrast with "the kingdom of darkness," "the kingdom of God," in contrast with "THE WORLD," of which Satan is the God and Prince; and it "is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," in contrast with sin and selfishness and sensuality—"the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."

Now, of one or other of these you are a member. You were "born of the flesh," in and of the world, and you have grown up, perhaps, and willingly remained in this kingdom of Satan, living "according to the course of this world," and not according to the will and word of God,—"seeking your own things, and not the things of God;"—loving and serving the creature and your own will and wishes, "rather than the Creator, who is God over all and blessed for-

ever," and WHOM you are bound to love and serve with all your heart and soul and strength and mind.

To become a Christian it is very evident, therefore, that you must, as Scripture teaches, be "translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," and "live no longer unto yourself, but unto Him who died for you and rose again." The question, therefore, "ought I to join the church, and to become a subject of the kingdom of God?" must earnestly engage your thoughts. For there can be no neutrality, no compromise between God and Mammon, Christ and Satan, the World and the Church. He that is not with Christ is against Him, and he that followeth not after Him is none of His, and is counted for an enemy and a traitor. You cannot serve both parties any more than a soldier could fight both for the Russians and the Allies in the Crimean war.

God claims the allegiance of every man to Christ, to whom "all power is given in heaven and on earth, and to whom every knee must bow"—as a friend or an enemy—"of things in heaven and things on earth, and things un-

der the earth." But to bow to Christ is to become a member of His kingdom, by having the enmity of our hearts slain by the power of the Holy Ghost, so that, laying down "the weapons of our rebellion," we "deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Christ," as our Leader, Master, Teacher and King.

"Ought I to join the Church of Christ?" Yes, my dear reader, you ought and must, or perish among His adversaries. I speak of the Church now in its spiritual character, as One in God the Father, one in Christ, one in the Spirit, one in faith and hope and glory. Of this church or kingdom you must be a member here below, in order to be a partaker in its glorious consummation, and blessedness in heaven. How foolish, then, is it for persons to think they ought not to join the church. Ought they not to repent and believe the Gospel, and be saved? But this is to be made members of the church or kingdom of God which "is within you"—in the heart. Every man, therefore, ought assuredly to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Having done this, then it is his duty to inquire in what portion of that kingdom, as visibly represented among men,

he should "go in, yes into Christ's vineyard, and work?" On this point, however, I do not wish to advise you. My object is higher. I wish to urge upon you the paramount duty of becoming spiritual members of Christ's spiritual kingdom or church, and to show you the provision made for your help, encouragement, and growth in grace, in the ordinances, duties and enterprises of the Church, in whatever evangelical denomination you are led to "cast in your lot."

This, then, is my object, dear reader, in writing this volume. I wish to come into your closet with you, and reason with you. I know how diffident persons are to speak on this subject with their own pastor, parents, or friends. This is very strange, but very common, and proves how averse the natural heart is to spiritual things, and how deep-seated are its pride and alienation from God. The extent to which this morbid feeling is carried has often surprised me. Not long since I was greatly interested in the case of a young lady who had long been seriously considering the subject of personal religion, but who was remarkably diffident and unwilling to be approached on the

subject. I tried in vain to draw her out into conversation, or to get a correct knowledge of her actual views and feelings. I gave her a book to read, which I thought would open up the way for conversation after reading it; but although, as I afterwards learned, she read it, with very great anxiety, she returned it, with the special request that I would not speak to her on the subject of religion. What was I to do? I felt very solicitous to do her good. I induced my wife, to whom she was very much attached, to converse with her and endeavor to overcome her reluctance to converse with me. She consented to come and see her, though under a promise that I should not speak to her. She came, and after a long and most touching interview with her, my wife came into my room deeply affected, and said to me, "I know not what to do. I have said all I can to her, and I wish you would go in and see her." I went in and found her trembling like an aspen leaf. I endeavored to allay her excited feelings, by assuring her that although I felt very anxious to converse with her, and give her the benefit of any experience and knowledge I might have,

that nevertheless I would say nothing to her, unless it was agreeable to her own feelings. She soon became calm enough to speak, when she said, "I am not fit or prepared to join the church." "It would be the very last thing I would advise you to do," I replied, "to unite with any particular church, unless you are both fit and prepared. You may, however, be both fit and prepared, and yet imagine that you are not, and thus be led to neglect both a positive duty and a most important means of grace and confidence, of comfort and usefulness. I would be very glad, therefore, if you would tell me what you consider necessary in order to uniting with the church." She replied, that "she did not think any one ought to unite with a church unless they felt satisfied in their own minds that their hearts were renewed by the Spirit of God, and that they really loved Christ." I told her that I was very glad to hear her say so, as I thought it would be both sinful and dangerous for any one to profess what they did not really believe and feel, and that it was undoubtedly the primary and all-important matter to secure an interest in Christ, the influences of the Spirit, and an abiding de-

termination and desire to become not merely a professor, but a possessor of religion, and not merely an outwardly consistent member of the church, but a *real* Christian—a Christian in principle, in heart, and in growing sanctification and holiness. But, I added, while this is true, many persons look for evidences of this state of heart which are not essential, and overlook those that exist within them, and which are quite sufficient to prove that God, the Holy Ghost, has "worked in them" to will and to feel as they do, and who ought therefore to "work out their own salvation," by doing "whatsoever Christ has commanded," and relying upon whatsoever Christ has promised to do in and for those that commit their souls unto Him, as unto a faithful Redeemer. It is necessary to have faith, and love, and hope, and an unqualified submission to God in Christ, a willingness to give up everything inconsistent with a loving and loyal obedience to Him, and a sincere desire to be saved from sin as well as from guilt, and to be sanctified and made a holy, happy, whole-hearted Christian, as well as to be justified and delivered from condemnation. But it is not necessary that these

views and feelings should be perfect, unclouded, and untroubled with doubts. The question is, do you, as far as you know your own heart, really feel in this way? Do you feel anxious to have these feelings strengthened and confirmed, and is it your sincere desire and purpose, with the help of divine grace, to live and act as a true and devoted and growing spiritual Christian? If you do, then you have evidence that the ever-blessed Spirit has wrought in you a saving change; and you have in these feelings and convictions and desires, the fruits of that Spirit by which He witnesseth with your spirit that you are born again, not of the will, or word, or power of man, not of water merely, but by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. It is not for you to prescribe to God any amount or degree of feeling, any time or mode of conversion, and still less the enjoyment of peace, hope and confidence, before "*doing* the will of Christ," and as the result of so "doing," feeling assured by your own joyful consciousness that your experience of the saving power of His gospel "is from God." The order of God's working in the conversion of the soul is as various in different

individuals as their individual character and history, or as the breaking and progress of the light of day to which it is in Scripture compared. On some the light of the Sun of Righteousness shines with the dawn of life, and their light increases with such silent and imperceptible development that its origin is lost amid the memories of infancy. Such is also the case with others who are brought up in the green pastures and by the pleasant waters of parental piety and instruction, and whose early feet have learned to walk in the ways of wisdom and the paths of peace. To others, again, the dawn and morning, and perhaps noon of life, are clouded in darkness, so that no light, no "clear shining" appears, until all at once, as to Saul of Tarsus, that sun breaks through the intervening clouds and dazzles and overcomes them by its brightness. The question, therefore, in every case, is not when or how, or with what accompanying evidence, the heart is "transformed by the renewing of the Holy Ghost," but what are the present, prevailing, and permanent evidences that "He who hath wrought you for the self-same thing is God." And as to peace and confidence and joy, these are the rewards and recom-

penses, and not, *generally*, the precursors of actual devotion, and trustful compliance with all known and prescribed duty.

Our conversation was long. My young friend became full and free in her communications, and the result was, my clear conviction that God had early called her by His Spirit, as He did Samuel, and that,—as I have often found the case,—by long self-inquiry, and distrust, and procrastination, she had become incapable of forming a right estimate of her own feelings and of her real convictions. Such a course will invariably engender doubts and difficulties, and cause those who have good reason to rejoice and give God thanks for what He has done for their souls, and to "take the cup of salvation and pay their vows unto the Lord, in the presence of the congregation," to "hang their heads as a bulrush," and to go in heaviness for many years.

The ultimate result with this young lady, and with various other persons to whom I might refer, has been, that they have found Christ faithful to his promises. They were emboldened to present themselves before His altar, to enter into public and solemn covenant with

Him, to find in so doing strength and confidence imparted to them, and having been planted in the house of God, to flourish in the courts of the Lord, and still to bring forth fruit in all the exercises and activities of the Christian's life.

Not very long ago, I entered into conversation with a middle-aged gentleman, on the subject of religion, and his duty as a father of a family, to live and act as a Christian parent. He admitted the truth of all I said, and that he had thought much and deeply on the subject; "but," said he, "it is a very solemn thing to join the church, and ought to be very fully and carefully considered, especially as many join the church who fall from their high calling and thus bring great disrepute upon religion." "That is very true," said I. "Our Saviour himself told us that in the church there would be tares as well as wheat, and bad as well as good professors. But you must also admit that it is a very solemn thing to live, and a very solemn thing to die; and that, if, as it clearly is, your duty to be a true Christian and a member of Christ's church, it is a very solemn thing to live in open disobedience

and neglect of Christ's authority and commandments."

And is it not, my dear reader? Let me then beseech you to accompany me in earnest prayerfulness, while I endeavor to point out to you the nature and evidences of faith in Christ, and the duty, and privilege, and great advantages, of being a consistent member of His church on earth. I know you not. I shall never probably see you. But I am with you in spirit, and I love you as one of God's children, and therefore, my brother or sister in the flesh, I should be very thankful if I can, to any degree, be helpful to you in your present state of mind. I know how trying it is, and can sympathize with you; and "my heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved." But there is One who can do infinitely more and better for you than I could possibly do; One who can both give you right views and feelings, and the evidences of them, and who can "strengthen you with all might in the inner man," and dispose and enable you for every duty. Oh! yes, it hath not entered into the heart of any man to conceive fully the way of God in the conversion of the soul. Do

thou, therefore, All-seeing, Omnipotent Spirit, the Comforter and Guide of souls, manifest thy presence and power to thy servant or handmaid, whosoever they be, that read this book. Unseal and open their eyes. Unstop their ears. Unbar the closed door of their hearts. Illumine their understandings. Enliven their conscience. Quicken their dead hearts. Guide their doubting spirits. Bring Christ, in His all-sufficiency, fullness and freeness, as a living, loving, divine, ever-present and omnipotent Saviour, before their minds. In Thy light may they see light. From Thy life may they derive life. And do Thou so help all their infirmities and overcome all their difficulties, that they may be enabled to come to Christ as sinful, guilty, and impotent; and relying on His grace, take up their cross, deny themselves, come out from the world and be separate, and follow Him by a diligent observance of all His statutes and commandments.

Come in, thou blessed of the Lord,
  Stranger nor foe art thou;
We welcome thee with warm accord,
  Our friend, our brother now.

The hand of fellowship, the heart
  Of love, we offer thee;

Leaving the world, thou dost but part
From lies and vanity.

The cup of blessing which we bless,
The heavenly bread we break,
—Our Saviour's blood and righteousness,—
Freely with us partake.

In weal or woe, in joy or care,
Thy portion shall be ours;
Christians their mutual burthens share,
They lend their mutual powers.

Come with us, we will do thee good,
As GOD to us hath done;
Stand but in Him, as those have stood
Whose faith the victory won.

And when by turns we pass away,
As star by star grows dim,
May each, translated into day,
Be lost and found in Him.

SECTION II.

BELIEF IN CHRIST, AND CONFESSION OF CHRIST, BOTH NECESSARY AND OBLIGATORY.

In the order of nature man must *believe* before he can *confess* the truth as it is in Jesus, and must have faith and confidence in the person, work, and glorious all-sufficiency of Christ, before he can commit his soul into *His* hands as a faithful Redeemer, and openly acknowledge and confess Him before men. And yet, in that striking declaration of the apostle—(Rom. x. 9, 10)—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," we find confession is placed before believing. The reason of this apparent anomaly is found in the fact, that the apostle had more immediate reference to the judgment of man than to that of God. God looketh upon the heart, and

can discern its thoughts and intents. He can see faith even when it has never yet been whispered to the ear of mortal. But it is far different with respect to man. He can only judge from the outward appearance, and discover the state of the heart by the conversation and the conduct. Our heartfelt belief can therefore be known to our fellow-men only by our open confession and our correspondent outward devotion. A man's character is known by the company he keeps; and a man's opinions are known, *in every free country*, by the party to which he is attached, and by his own free and constant publication of them. And, in the same way, do we judge whether a man really and at heart, believes and trusts in the Saviour, by his readiness to confess Him before men, and to hold fast the profession of his faith steadfast to the end. When speaking, therefore, in reference to the judgment of man, the apostle puts confession, which is the effect, before belief, which is the cause, because it is only by the effect *we* can know anything of the cause.

But there is another reason for this arrangement, and that is, that *so far as it regards others*, the open and steadfast confession of the

truth is of more importance to the church and the world, than its inward possession. For the same reason that we cannot see the faith of another, which is in the heart, that faith can have no influence over us while it remains there. It cannot afford a testimony for the truth of Christ, or the all-sufficiency and glory of Christ. It cannot demonstrate to us the nature, efficacy and power of the gospel, and its ability to mould and fashion the character, and to sustain the soul in every time of need. It cannot, therefore, prevail upon others to "acquaint themselves now with God, and be at peace with Him," by the evident manifestation of what He has done for our souls. Our faith, therefore, to have any value to others—to be promotive of the glory of God—to advance the cause and kingdom of Christ—to bear an efficient testimony for Christ and his cross—and to lead to the conviction and conversion of others, must be openly confessed and manifested before men. Nay: would we reap any fruits and benefits from faith in our own souls, would we experience its power to save, to sanctify, to transform the heart, to mould our principles, to fashion our lives, and to sustain and comfort us under

all our trials, we must "come out from the world, take up our cross, deny ourselves," and identify ourselves with Christ's church and people, in a profession of the truth as it is in Jesus, and a diligent observance of His appointed ordinances.

But, while all this is true, still it is equally true that a *mere* profession of Christ, a mere outward observance of ordinances, is vain, worthless, and dangerous to salvation. It cannot do good to others, it cannot do good to ourselves, and it cannot glorify our Saviour. It is, in the moral world, what a monster is in the natural world, and bears no more resemblance to real piety than a picture does to a living man.

A picture is an imitation, and is perfect in proportion as that imitation is complete. And thus, also, is a profession of religion by membership and communion in some church, an imitation of true religion, which, existing in the heart, makes itself manifest in the life and conduct. Such a profession is considered good just so far as it is characterized by what are the outward natural acts and exercises of a believing, loving heart, and may thus deceive

others, and even a man himself. But it cannot deceive God, nor will He accept it as a substitute for heart religion. Without this it is worthless and dangerous. It is but a tare among the wheat, and can only at last be destroyed. Such a profession of religion God does not require, nor would I encourage. The rule of Christ is, "first give yourselves unto the Lord, and then unto His church—first believe with the heart, and then confess with the mouth."

Neither a profession, then, without faith, nor faith without a profession, is a complete, perfect, or symmetrical whole—a true development of man's glorious powers under the influence of the gospel. And the reason is, that man is a compound being, possessed of a body as well as a soul—of affections as well as intellect—of active powers as well as an understanding—and of social qualities as well as of personal attributes. What he does as man, he does with ALL his faculties; and what he approves in his understanding, he carries out into action by his will and his active powers. When a man, therefore, believes in his heart, he lives, and moves, and acts, in accordance with the

nature of the thing believed. There is no power which can paralyze the will to do where there is a heart to do, and a possibility of doing. In order to enable any man, therefore, heartily to *do*, it is necessary that he should heartily *believe*. This belief is the principle—the beginning—the fountain—the elastic spring—the ever-living power which works in us to will and to do.

Faith is the mightiest principle of human nature. It is the only inlet to our knowledge of every thing without us, every thing past and to come, every thing invisible and divine. It lies at the foundation of character and conduct. A man is what he *really*, not *seemingly* believes, and by inevitable necessity a man will act in accordance with what he sincerely and firmly believes. And as in regard to every thing else, man is ever ready to hazard anything, and to make any sacrifices, for what he believes requires, and will remunerate, the cost; so it is with him who truly believes in the truths of the gospel. They will become to him principles of life and conduct, and mould and transform his character, and direct and control his actions. As coals of fire they will burn within

him, until they find vent in the flames of devotedness and zeal.

"'Tis faith that changes all the heart,
'Tis faith that works by love,
That bids all sinful joys depart,
And lifts the thoughts above.

"'Tis faith that conquers earth and hell,
By a celestial power;
This is the grace that shall prevail
In the decisive hour."

SECTION III.

YOU MUST FIRST BELIEVE WITH THE HEART.

Would you, then, my dear reader, be saved? Would you "be reconciled to God, and be at peace with him," and thus be prepared for death, judgment, and eternity? Then you must do all that God requires, and in the order which He prescribes. You must first believe the testimony of God concerning Christ, with your heart, and then you must confess Christ with your mouth. God has in infinite mercy provided salvation through the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ. He has made a perfect atonement for all sin, and wrought out a righteousness which is of infinite merit and sufficiency. His "blood cleanseth from all sin." God is now reconciled and satisfied, so that while "he is a just God, he is also a Saviour." "GOD IS NOW IN CHRIST." We have no longer to do with an absolute Deity, with God as angry, jealous, and consuming as a fire. God is now in Christ, to whom

all judgment has been committed. Christ now sits upon the throne, and ever liveth at God's right hand, as "head over all things to His church," and as "a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins." So truly is this the case, that no man knoweth God but the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him. No man can come unto the Father but by the Son. No man can stand justified before God but he who stands there in the righteousness of Christ. It is through Him that the Spirit is imparted unto men. In Christ dwelleth all fullness. On Him is laid all our help. In Him are treasured up all the riches of Divine grace and mercy. God, therefore, now deals with sinners through Christ. Christ has been lifted up, as was his type the brazen serpent, in the wilderness, that whosoever believeth in him may be saved. Such is God's plan of mercy. Such is the gracious scheme of redemption. Such the way of life.

Now this plan of redemption evidently supposes that we are dead. And to believe in Christ, therefore, we must have a *clear* conviction, (I do not say how deep and strong, but a clear and full conviction) that we are "dead

in trespasses and sins ;" that we cannot justify ourselves in God's sight; that we can do nothing to reconcile our souls to God; nothing to make us acceptable to Him; nothing to produce penitence, or feeling, or peace, or joy in our hearts. Oh! my dear reader, have you been brought to this state of conviction before God? Are you "sure that the judgment of God against you is according to truth;" that you are verily guilty before Him; and that you are not only already condemned, but that you *deserve* the condemnation which is written against you? Have you been driven from all the refuges of lies in which men naturally hide themselves from this conviction? Have you given up your vain efforts to establish a righteousness of your own; either by comparing your character with that of others, and it may be with some who are professors of religion, and taking comfort from the thought that you are as good or better than they are; or by endeavoring, in addition to your morality, to secure God's favor by praying, reading, and observing outward duties? If you have *not* done this, if you are not condemned by your own conscience as verily guilty before God, then, with all your righteousness,

you are a miserable being. There is more hope of a fool, yea, even of the most abominable sinner, than there is of thee. To you there is not a word of peace, or comfort, or encouragement in the Gospel. To you Christ cannot be "made wisdom;" for you are "wise in your own conceit." To you Christ cannot be "made righteousness;" because you think that you are already better even than many who are "justified by faith." To you Christ cannot be "made sanctification," since you imagine that you have a good heart, and despise others. To you, therefore, the Gospel announces no good tidings, proclaims no Saviour, and offers no salvation. You are "the righteous whom Christ never came to call." You are "the whole who need no physician." For what is it to God, that you are AS GOOD, or better, and more amiable and estimable than others are, even than many professors of religion are, when God has pronounced his judgment, that "ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," "that EVERY MOUTH may be stopped, and ALL THE WORLD may become guilty before God;" and that by his personal character, obedience, morality, or religion, "there shall NO flesh be justified in His sight."

He is a most miserable professor who has no better foundation on which to build than his personal character, or holiness, or obedience. Verily he builds upon the sand, and when the floods arise, and the winds blow, all his vain hopes will perish. Christ, and his finished work of righteousness is the only foundation that is firm and everlasting. No goodness, or duties, or professions, or doings of ours, can make a balm that will cure the deadly plague of the soul. All the peace such hopes can give is like the plaster that covers the deep-seated cancer, which only favors its deadly growth and aggravates the malignity of the disease. Poor, miserable, outcast, guilty man can never weave a garment by all his efforts, that can hide his guilt and depravity from the scrutiny of Omniscient Purity. Oh! no, my dear reader, "unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees, (who certainly excelled all other men at that time in outward morality and religious devotion,) you cannot see the kingdom of God." You may be moral, honest, and devout; you may pray, and read, and receive the sacrament, and yet be "poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked." For if it is true that this class

of persons who *appeared* to be righteous before God, but who had no inward holiness—though they certainly had as good a hope as you have —"shall perish," where shall you, who flatter yourselves that you are as good as they were, where shall you find yourselves when death cuts off all further help, and oh! "how shall you escape the righteous judgment of God?"

Would you then, as a sinful creature, be saved, and have Christ and heaven as yours? Then you must leave behind you your own righteousness—all your morality, holiness, duties, tears, repentings, convictions, desires and prayers, and bring to Christ nothing but your sins, wants and miseries, or else you do not come to Christ as a Saviour at all, but only insult and despise him. Christ, if yours at all, will be your entire and your only Redeemer, and must be received by you as a poor, guilty, helpless sinner—impenitent, unbelieving, unfeeling, hard-hearted, and ungodly—or else you do not understand who Christ is, what He is, what He has done, or why he became a Saviour at all. To believe in Christ is to be convinced that you are a sinner, and that Christ is able and willing to save you AS A SINNER, and that He

became a Saviour because all men were sinners, and because there is no other way in which any man could ever be "saved *from* his sins." To accept Christ's righteousness alone—to trust in Christ's blood alone—to confide in Christ's strength alone—to look for faith, and hope, and joy, and holiness, to Christ's grace alone—and to do all this only because God has so planned, and testified, and commanded, and promised;—this is the sum of the Gospel—this is to make Christ a real Saviour—this is to "confess him and to believe on him with the heart." When you can see how God has provided for your soul, in Christ and his finished work, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification," and repentance, and hope, and peace, and comfort; strength to persevere, to grow in grace, to keep the faith, and to finish your course, and to do all things through His strengthening grace;—then hast thou found thy rest, oh! thou wearied soul; then art thou in the ark that will outride every tempest; and then art thou safe in the arms of Omnipotent Mercy.

All our unbelief, our fears, our doubts, and our want of feeling, of faith, and of confidence,

arise from our self-righteousness and self-sufficiency, which keep us *from* Christ, and keep therefore our guilt and our guilty fears alive within us. Would that we could feel and practically realize that Christ is our peace, and not duties; that Christ and not tears of sorrow, is the source of our hope, our life, our pardon. Oh yes! Christ is our true advocate with the Father, and not prayers; and Christ alone, and not any efforts of ours, can secure reconciliation, and life, and the remission of our sins.

"God is love," infinite love. So much did "God love the world" as to devise the scheme of redemption in eternity, and perfect it in time. "He willeth not the death of the sinner." "He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should turn unto him and live." He has become reconciled unto the world, and is "now waiting and willing to be gracious." He has provided life for the dead; for those that were dead in law, dead by condemnation, dead in depravity, dead in their own utter moral impotency, dead in their absolute inability of themselves to change their wills, their purposes, or their affections; "dead in trespasses and sins." And this life is in God's dear Son, "hid with Christ in God." "Christ is the way,

the truth, and the life." "If any man believe in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "The word is nigh thee," O sinner, "even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

In all the Scriptures, therefore, there is not one hard word against a poor sinner, stripped of all self-righteousness, who casts himself for life, light, and peace, on the Lord Jesus Christ. Believe then but Christ's willingness, my dear reader, and Christ will "make you willing." If you cannot of yourself believe, remember that Christ is "the author of faith." If you feel no sense of pardon, remember that Christ "gives remission of sins," and secures the favor of the FATHER. If you do not feel as sorry for your sins as you should, forget not that Christ "giveth repentance also." Do you feel weak? "He giveth power to the faint." Do you feel your faith feeble? "He increaseth

strength." Are you full of infirmities? "He is not an high-priest who cannot be touched with them, but one who was in all points tried as we are," that He might be able to feel towards us as brethren. Does your faith tremble and vacillate, like the reed shaken by the wind, or the taper dying in the socket? "He will not break the bruised reed," nor quench the dimly burning taper, but will sustain and revive them. He "works in the heart to will and to do." "By grace, then," O sinner, "thou art saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God."

O sinner, wilt thou not then believe, and trust, and "commit thy soul to Christ," sick, blind, unbelieving, hard, unfeeling as it is, and plead with Him for the fulfillment of His own gracious word? What is your unbelief? Why, it is making your guilt greater than Christ's righteousness, your case beyond Christ's remedy, your darkness beyond Christ's power to enlighten, and your wants beyond Christ's ability or willingness to supply. Thus do you undervalue Christ, reject His righteousness, deny His truth, and affirm that His blood does not "cleanse from all sin."

Oh yes! unbelief hardens your heart, blinds

your eyes, shuts your ears, sears your conscience, and keeps your soul closed to that precious, priceless Saviour who stands at the door and knocks, seeking for admittance. Were but this veil withdrawn, you would at once be filled with rapture in view of the freeness, fulness and all-sufficiency of the grace of Christ; and though you see Him not with your bodily eyes, yet believing on Him, you would rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Let me give you an illustration of this as presented by another, who has, in the case described, only portrayed a scene which is every day verified in the experience of new-born souls.

It was a time of the outpouring of the Spirit in a Female Seminary. From day to day, and week to week, young voices were learning the first notes of that new song which evermore ascends from the whole family of the redeemed. There were others, too, whose countenances betrayed the anguish of hearts aroused to a sense of God's claims, and yet unreconciled to Him.

Among the latter class was one whose case had excited special interest. She was soon to leave the seminary, and with her talents and

energy must exert a powerful influence over those among whom her lot should be cast. Would it be for good or evil? She was now deeply convinced of her guilt and danger; but there were some who remembered with sorrow that in earlier years she had seemed not less powerfully awakened, and yet remained out of Christ.

Week after week went by, but Ellen found no peace. She was outwardly calm, but it seemed like the calmness of despair. Whether in the recitation-room, at table, or in the unrestrained freedom of social converse, a single glance at her countenance revealed to the most casual observer the settled gloom of the soul. Many a heart ached in view of her anguish, and many a prayer was sent up to heaven in her behalf. One after another her teachers and schoolmates sought opportunities of conversation with her, on the great subject which engrossed her thoughts. While she was frank and unreserved in communicating her feelings, and listened attentively to those who tried to explain to her the way of salvation, there was still a difficulty which none could remove.

"It is of no use," she would say. "All this

as been explained to me over and over, as learly as it could be. But there is something n the way; I cannot come to the Saviour, and fear I never shall."

"Ah, we cannot help her!" sighed her friends, as some of them reviewed together heir fruitless efforts. "We can only commend ner to God. Let us pray for her."

At length there was a change, as we trust, the great change by which sinners are new-born. Peace was now as visible in Ellen's countenance as distress had been before.

"Oh! what a wonderful way of salvation!" was the utterance of her heart. "How simple, how beautiful, how glorious! Why did I not come to Christ before? That mysterious hinderance which seemed to be in my way was NOTHING BUT UNBELIEF."

Truly, it was "nothing but unbelief." And now, "being justified by *faith*," Ellen had "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And thus is it with you. It is "nothing but unbelief," anxious reader, which keeps you from Christ to-day. It is that same unbelief which, if not abandoned, will finally shut you out of heaven. Ah! unbelief is a fearful thing

—a wall between your soul and Christ—a weight to sink you in the burning lake forever.

There is, believe me, no other heart's ease, no other way of peace and assurance for any man, than to glorify Christ by confiding in His power, promises, and gracious loving kindness. Art thou persuaded of this? Then what difficulties or distracting fears can cloud thy hopes? Art thou in any doubt on this point—then tarry here. Look not forward nor backward, neither to the right nor to the left, neither to heaven nor to hell. Look only to Christ's own word; to His promises, invitations, provisions, and merciful rebukes of thy faithless and unbelieving heart. Look only to Himself; cast thyself at His feet, like Mary; or throw thyself into His arms, and there plead until He give thee power and faith to believe. Tell Him you believe, but so doubtingly that He must "help your unbelief." Tell Him you love Him, but so feebly you are afraid you do not love Him at all, and ask Him to let his love "constrain you." Implore Him to shed abroad his love in your soul by the Holy Ghost as to fill you with love to Him. Can you fail to be heard and to be helped! Is His arm shortened, or

His ear heavy? Oh, no. "Why, then, art thou cast down, oh fearful soul? Why art thou disquieted within thee? Hope in God, for thou shalt yet praise Him. Wait on the Lord, and he will be the light of thy countenance and the strength of thine heart." In this "acceptable time" cry mightily unto Him who can quicken thy dead heart, and make thee alive unto God, a new creature,

"Born by a new celestial birth."

Do this, and thou shalt yet be able to say, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

Power from on high, O God, impart
Power in thy gospel to believe;
Power Christ to love with all my heart,
Power even as a son of God to live.

Thy Word to me in vain is given,
I hear, I read, I learn in vain;
In vain thy Son came down from heaven,
If thou "the Spirit's might" restrain.

Now be His sacred influence felt,
With searching, cleansing, quickening force,
Till this hard heart in sorrow melt,
And tears of penitence flow forth.

Convinced and humbled in the dust,
Beneath the burden of my guilt,
I own thy law's dread sentence just,
But plead the blood of pardon spilt.

Thy Spirit witness with that blood,
And Christ my Saviour glorify;
Till as a new-born child of God,
I can with rapture, "Father!" cry.

"MY SON, GIVE ME THINE HEART."

Prov. xxiii. 26.

Here is my heart!—my God, I give it thee;
I heard thee call and say,
"Not to the world, my child, but unto ME;"
I heard and will obey.
Here is love's offering to my King,
Which, a glad sacrifice, I bring,—
Here is my heart.

Here is my heart!—surely the gift, though poor,
My God will not despise;
Vainly and long I sought to make it pure,
To meet thy searching eyes;
Corrupted first in Adam's fall,
The stains of sin pollute it all,—
My guilty heart!

Here is my heart!—my heart so hard before,
Now by thy grace made meet;
Yet bruised and wearied, it can only pour
Its anguish at thy feet;
It groans beneath the weight of sin,
It sighs salvation's joy to win,—
My mourning heart!

Here is my heart!—in Christ its longings end,
Near to his Cross it draws;
It says, "Thou art my portion, O my Friend,
Thy blood my ransom was."
And in the Saviour it has found
What blessedness and peace abound,—
My trusting heart!

Here is my heart!—ah! Holy Spirit, come,
Its nature to renew,
And consecrate it wholly as thy home,
A temple fair and true.
Teach it to love and serve thee more,
To fear thee, trust thee, and adore,—
My cleansed heart!

Here is my heart!—it trembles to draw near
The glory of Thy throne;
Give it the shining robe Thy servants wear,
Of righteousness Thine own:
Its pride and folly chase away,
And all its vanity, I pray,—
My humbled heart!

Here is my heart!—teach it, O Lord, to cling
In gladness unto thee;

And in the day of sorrow still to sing,
"Welcome, my God's decree."
Believing, all its journey through,
That thou art wise, and just, and true,—
My waiting heart!

Here is my heart!—O Friend of friends, be near,
To make each tempter fly;
And when my latest foe I wait with fear,
Give me the victory!
Gladly on thy love reposing,
Let me say, when life is closing,—
Here is my heart!

JUST AS THOU ART.

Just as thou art—without one trace
Of love, or joy, or inward grace,
Or meetness for the heavenly place,
O guilty sinner, come.

Thy sins I bore on Calvary's tree;
The stripes, thy due, were laid on Me,
That peace and pardon might be free—
O wretched sinner, come.

Burdened with guilt, wouldst thou be blest?
Trust not the world—it gives no rest:
I bring relief to hearts opprest—
O weary sinner, come.

Come, leave thy burden at the cross;
Count all thy gains but empty dross:
My grace repays all earthly loss—
O needy sinner, come.

Come, hither, bring thy boding fears,
Thy aching heart, thy bursting tears;
'Tis mercy's voice salutes thine ears;
O trembling sinner, come.

"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come;"
Rejoicing saints re-echo, Come:
Who faints, who thirsts, who will, may come:
THY SAVIOUR bids THEE come.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT IT IS TO BELIEVE, FURTHER EXPLAINED AND URGED.

I HAVE already, my dear reader, reasoned with you upon this subject, and endeavored to show what is implied in believing on Christ.

Still, however, you hesitate, and doubt, and fear to cast yourself upon the Saviour, and to look to Him for faith, and hope, and pardon, and acceptance, and the full assurance of hope, and peace, and joy. The legal spirit of the natural heart still leads you to imagine that you must be better, and feel better, and have a far deeper conviction of sin and love to Christ, before you can feel warranted in reposing upon Him, as "made unto you of God, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."

Let me, then, again show you what it is to believe on Christ, and, in doing so, I will employ the following illustration:

It was a dark night: a high wind was blowing without, while all the family of Mr. H. were lying quietly in their beds, breathing calmly in the soundest slumbers.

All at once Mr. H. was aroused by the terrible cry of fire. He was not sufficiently waked, at first, to understand the cause; but the sound grew nearer and nearer, and soon many were gathering under the window. "Fire! fire! your house is on fire!" they shouted as they pounded heavily upon the doors. Throwing a few clothes around him, Mr. H. rushed to the door; and what was his surprise and fear to discover that his own dwelling was in flames! He hastily returned, called up his terrified wife, and taking the babe and the next older child, they quickly sought shelter in an adjoining house. His oldest son, about ten years of age, slept in a chamber in another part of the house, near the room of the servant maid who lived in the family.

Immediately the father hastened to rescue him, feeling but little anxiety for his property, if his family only might all be saved. On his way he met the maid: "Where is Charles?" said Mr. H., surprised to see her alone.

"Crying in his room," answered the frightened girl. "I but just escaped, and the stairs are now all in flames."

The fire had broken out in that part of the house, and the flames were now spreading with fearful rapidity. Almost distracted, Mr. H. rushed out, and hastened to the part of the house beneath the window of his son's sleeping-room.

The window was thrown up. The terrified boy was standing there crying out in agony, "Father! father! how shall I get out?"

He could be seen by the glare of the fire in the room; but he could see no one beneath him—it was so dark—although he heard many voices.

"Here I am, my son," cried out the deeply-moved father; "here I am; fear not. Lay hold of the sill of the window, and drop yourself down. I will certainly catch you."

Charles crept out of the window, and clinging with the grasp of a drowning person, he hung trembling, and afraid to let go.

"Let go, my son," cried the father.

"I can't see you father."

"But I am here, my son."

"I'm afraid, father, that I shall fall."

"Let go; you need not fear," again shouted the father. The flames began to approach the window—the casement grew hot—if he stayed there he would be burned. He recollected that his father was strong; that he loved him, and would not tell him to do any thing that would injure him. He drew in his breath, unclapsed his fingers, and in a moment was in his father's arms, overpowered, and weeping for joy at his wonderful escape.

Now, here was an act of simple faith, that is of absolute trust and confidence, in the ability and willingness of his father. But let us endeavor to analyze it. Why, then, let me ask, was it necessary that the boy should make such an adventurous fall? Because he was in danger of certain death, and there was no way of escape but by the window. Why, then, did he not at *once* cast himself out of the window? Because he knew that if he did so, depending on his own strength, he would be crushed and broken. Why, then, did his father hasten to stand under him, and receive him when he fell? Because he so loved him as to be willing to run the risk of his own injury. Why did the father encourage and recommend his boy to let

go? Because he knew that *he* was able to hold him up when he fell, and because there was no time to lose, seeing that death might seize on the child at any moment, or the walls fall in and crush them both. And why did the boy finally drop, although *he could not see* his father's arms at all? Because he believed that his father was able to receive him; that his father saw him; and that his father would not fail of his promises.

Now, just such, my dear reader, is faith as it regards the salvation of your soul. You are now in most certain danger of everlasting death, because of your ungodliness and sin. The flames of vengeance burn around you. But Christ has secured redemption and everlasting life; and God, our Father in heaven, has so loved us as to covenant and engage that whosoever believeth in Christ shall be saved. Neither can you be saved in any other way, for out of Christ "our God is a consuming fire." By no efforts of yours, therefore, can you escape from Him "who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" for ever. You cannot atone for past sins. There they are, and they cry aloud for vengeance. You are already con-

demned, and for aught you know, sentence may be passed upon you at any moment, and then "eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," awaits you in that "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Christ, however, is ABLE to save you, because he is God as well as man. Suppose the boy suspended by his feeble hands had seen another little boy like himself stretch his weak arms, and call upon him to trust to him for deliverance. He would have cried out at once, "You cannot save me." Just so the convicted sinner feels, when invited to put his trust in a man like himself, or in any one short of an almighty Saviour. "A mere human deliverer!" he exclaims—"Do you mean to mock me? What can such a deliverer do for a wretch like me? What can he do with those mountains of guilt which are pressing upon me, and with that deathless worm which is gnawing within me? What can he do to avert the dreadful sentence of the law which hangs over me, or to quench the devouring flames which are kindled to consume me?" The convinced sinner feels that he

needs a Divine Saviour—an Almighty Saviour —a living, loving, personal, ever and everywhere present, and sympathizing Saviour,— One who is able to "save to the uttermost"— One whose "blood cleanseth from all sin." He feels that no other Saviour can meet the fearful exigencies of his case, or can ever do him any good. And when he looks into the Bible, he finds that just such a Saviour is provided and freely offered. Here he finds that the Lord Jesus Christ is a holy Saviour, whose word is truth—a glorious Saviour, altogether deserving his confidence and love,—"the great God and our Saviour"—"God manifest in the flesh"—one who "is God"—yea, whose "name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace."

When, therefore, with eye of faith he sees this Saviour—who is "mighty to save,"— standing beneath, extending His Omnipotent arms to receive him, and calling out to him to let go all his false dependences and hopes; what should prevent him from doing it—from simply putting forth the act of faith, and falling into the kind and gracious arms of his Almighty Deliverer? He obviously has all the knowledge

and conviction that are necessary, and he has only now to believe in Christ, to trust to Him, to fall into his embrace, and live for ever.

O yes! when we find that Christ is the only Saviour known to the Bible,—that salvation or damnation are dependent on our belief or rejection of Him,—that God everywhere refers us for salvation and eternal life to Him,—that He is made the object of supreme love and honor, and the centre of worship, in heaven and on earth,—and that faith in Christ, trust in Christ, coming to Christ, living in Christ, following Christ, and glorying in Christ, are the essential elements of all Christian experience, —how can any reasonable man question whether Christ is, as the apostle John says he is, "The true God, and eternal life, and able therefore to save to the uttermost all who put their trust in Him?"

We can easily imagine a host of excuses which this little boy might have offered; but we also know, and you will admit, that they would all have been false and vain, and that he had every warrant and encouragement to act as he was required. We know, too, that in no other way could the child have been

saved at all, and that if he had remained fearful, and hesitating, and halting, he would certainly have been lost. Now just so is it, O sinner! with you. You can frame a hundred excuses; but they are all false, and without any foundation; and if you do not break through them all, and at once and for ever, and ENTIRELY yield yourself to Christ, casting your soul on him and committing it to His hands, you must perish.

SINNER RESOLVING TO GO TO CHRIST.

ESTH. iv. 16.

Come, humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve;
Come with your guilt and fear oppress'd
And make this last resolve:—

"I'll go to Jesus, though my sin
Hath like a mountain rose;
I know his courts, I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

Prostrate I'll lie before his throne,
And there my guilt confess;
I'll tell him I'm a wretch undone,
Without his sovereign grace.

I'll to the gracious King approach,
Whose sceptre pardon gives;
Perhaps he may command my touch—
And then the suppliant lives.

Perhaps he will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

I can but perish if I go,
I am resolv'd to try;
For if I stay away, I know,
I must for ever die."

CHAPTER V.

GIVE YOURSELF UNTO THE LORD.

Man is so constituted, that in order to fix and deepen his thoughts, they must be spoken or written. Language and letters are intended to be means of expressing, and of giving stability, to the thoughts and feelings of the soul. When they really do so, the man is sincere and truthful, but when not, he is deceitful and hypocritical. Where more than one person is concerned, reliance is put upon words and writing, in proportion as there is mutual confidence, but in all matters of importance, "to put an end to strife," and to impart unwavering assurance, an oath or written engagement is given. This is the foundation of all business transactions among men. This, also, is the case in the formation of all partnerships and associations. Even as individuals, we never enter upon any important transaction without deep reflection and very careful decision. This ought to be the

case, and every such determination ought to be made after seeking the guidance and blessing of God. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy steps."

Were you, for instance,—that I may use an illustration to which in Scripture the consecration of the soul to Christ is compared—solicited, and did you feel it to be your duty, to marry, how carefully would you weigh every consideration bearing on the eventful issue. How often would you retire within yourself, and in view of all the possible results of your decision, earnestly importune that "wisdom that cometh from above, and which is profitable to direct." Having done this, you would then, probably, set your seal to a written engagement, or otherwise express your assent. This would afterwards be ratified by a solemn public contract in the presence of God, and probably of many witnesses assembled on the occasion, your hymeneal torch be lighted at God's altar, and your heart be there plighted in faith to the partner of your bosom.

Now, so it is in your relation to God. To Him also, thoughts and feelings are expressed by words or writing. In this way they are also deepened and confirmed. And as God requires

you to "give Him your heart," and to "vow unto the Lord," and "pay your vow," you cannot hesitate about either the obligation or the expediency of doing so. Only let your heart, and your lips, and your pen agree. Let what you say or write be what is "written on the fleshy table of your heart," and you cannot fail to derive from a solemn consecration, important and lasting benefit.

Let me then beseech you to join me, even now, in making a surrender of yourself to God in Christ. Come with me into God's presence, as "in Christ he is reconciling sinners to himself," and dedicate yourself to Him, saying,

Eternal and unchangeable Jehovah! Thou great Creator of heaven and earth! and adorable Lord of angels and men, I desire, with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul, to fall down at this time in thine awful presence, and earnestly pray that thou wilt penetrate my very heart and soul with a suitable sense of thine unutterable and inconceivable glories! Trembling may justly lay hold upon me, when I, a sinful worm, presume to lift up my head to Thee, presume to appear in thy majestic presence on such an occasion as this.

Who am I, O Lord God, or what is my house? What is my nature or descent, my character and desert, that I should speak of this, and desire that I may be one party in a covenant, where thou, the King of kings and Lord of lords, art the other. I blush and am confounded, even to mention it before thee. But, O Lord, great as is thy majesty, so also is thy mercy. If thou wilt hold converse with any of thy creatures, thy superlatively exalted nature must stoop, must stoop infinitely low; and I know that in and through Jesus the Son of thy love, thou condescendest to visit sinful mortals, and to allow their approach to thee, and their covenant intercourse with thee. Nay, I know that the scheme and plan is thine own, and that thou hast graciously sent to propose it to us; as none untaught by thee would have been able to form it, or inclined to embrace it, even when actually proposed. To thee, therefore, do I now come, invited by the name of thy Son, and trusting in His righteousness and grace: laying myself at thy feet with shame and confusion of face, and smiting upon my breast, I say with the humble publican, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' I acknowledge, Lord, I have been a great transgressor. My

sins have reached unto heaven, and mine iniquities are lifted up unto the skies. The irregular propensities of my corrupt and degenerate nature have, in ten thousand aggravated instances, wrought to bring forth fruit unto death. And if thou shouldst be strict to mark mine offences, I must be silent under a load of guilt, and immediately sink into destruction. But thou hast graciously called me to return unto thee, though I have been a wandering sheep, a prodigal son, a backsliding child. Behold, therefore, O Lord, I come unto thee. I come, convinced not only of my sin, but of my folly. I come, from my very heart ashamed of myself, and with sincerity and humility confess that I have erred exceedingly. I am confounded with the remembrance of these things; but be thou merciful to my unrighteousness, and do not remember against me my sins and my transgressions. Permit me, O Lord, to bring back unto thee those powers and faculties, which I have ungratefully and sacrilegiously alienated from thy service, and receive, I beseech thee, thy poor perverted creature, who is now convinced of the right thou hast to him, and desires nothing in the whole earth so much

as to be truly thine! Blessed God! it is with the utmost solemnity that I make this surrender of myself to thee. Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! I acknowledge the Lord to be my God. I solemnly declare myself this day to be one of his covenant people. Hear, O thou God of heaven! and record it in the book of thy remembrance, that henceforth I am thine, entirely thine. I would not merely consecrate unto thee some of my powers, or some of my possessions, or give thee a certain proportion of my services, or all I am capable of for a limited time; but I would be wholly thine, and thine forever. From this day do I solemnly renounce all the former lords which have had dominion over me —every sin and every lust, and bid in thy name an eternal defiance to the powers of hell, which have most unjustly usurped the empire over my soul, and to all the corruptions which their fatal temptations have introduced into it. The whole frame of my nature, all the faculties of my mind, all the members of my body, would I present before thee this day, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which I know to be my most reasonable service. To thee I consecrate all my worldly possessions.

In thy service I desire to spend all the remainder of my time upon earth, and beg Thou wouldst instruct and influence me, so that, whether my abode here be longer or shorter, every year and month, day and hour, may be used in such a manner as shall most effectually promote Thine honor, and subserve the scheme of Thy wise and gracious providence; and I earnestly pray, that whatever influence Thou givest me over others, in any of the relations of life in which I may stand, or in consequence of any peculiar regard which might be paid me, Thou wouldst give me strength and courage to exert myself to the utmost for Thy glory, resolving, not only that I will do it myself, but that all others, so far as I can rationally and properly influence them, shall serve the Lord. In this course, O blessed God! would I steadily persevere to the end of my life, earnestly praying, that every future day of it may supply the deficiencies and correct the irregularities of the former, and that I may, by Divine grace, be enabled not only to hold on in that happy way, but daily to grow more active in it.

Nor do I only consecrate all that I am and have to thy service, but I also most humbly resign and submit to thy heavenly will, myself

and all that I can call mine. I leave, O Lord, to thy management and direction all that I possess and all I wish; and set every enjoyment and every interest before Thee, to be disposed of as Thou pleasest. Continue, or remove what Thou hast given me; bestow or refuse, what I imagine I want, as thou, Lord, shalt see good; and though I dare not say I will never repine, yet I hope I may venture to say, that I will labor not only to submit but to acquiesce; not only to bear what thou doest in thy most afflictive dispensations: but to consent to it, and to praise thee for it, contentedly resolving, in all that thou appointest, my will into thine, and looking on myself as nothing, and on thee, O God! as the great eternal all, whose word ought to determine every thing, and whose government ought to be the joy of the whole rational creation.

Use me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as the instrument of thy glory, and honor me so far, as either by doing or suffering what thou shalt appoint, to bring some revenue of praise to thee, and of benefit to the world in which I dwell; and may it please thee, O my Creator! from this day forward, to number me among

thy peculiar people, that I may no more be a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God. Receive, O heavenly Father! thy returning prodigal. Wash me in the blood of thy dear Son; clothe me in robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, and sanctify me throughout by the power of thy Spirit! Destroy, I beseech thee, more and more the power of sin in my heart! Transform me more and more into thine own image, and fashion me to the resemblance of Jesus, whom henceforward I would acknowledge as my teacher, my sacrifice, my intercessor, and my Lord! Communicate to me, I beseech thee, all needful influences of thy purifying, cheering, and comforting Spirit; and lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, which will put the sublimest joy and gladness into my soul.

Dispose my affairs, O God! in a manner which may be subservient to thy glory and my own truest happiness; and when I have done and borne thy will upon earth, call me from hence at what time, and in what manner thou pleasest; only grant that in my dying moments, and the near view of eternity, I may remember these my engagements to thee, and may employ

my latest breath in thy service; and do thou, O Lord, when thou seest the agonies of dissolving nature upon me, remember this covenant too, even though I should then be incapable of recollecting it. Look down, O my heavenly Father, with a pitying eye, upon thy languishing, dying child: place thine everlasting arms underneath me for my support; put strength and confidence into my departing spirit; and receive it to the embraces of thy everlasting love! Welcome it to the abodes of them that sleep in Jesus; to wait with them that glorious day, when the last of thy promises to thy covenant people shall be fulfilled in their triumphant resurrection, and that abundant entrance, which shall be administered to them into thine everlasting kingdom, of which thou hast assured them in thy covenant, and in the hope of which I now lay hold of it, desiring to live and to die as with my hand on that hope!

And when I am thus numbered among the dead, and all the interests of mortality are over with me forever, if this solemn memorial should chance to fall into the hands of any surviving friends, may it be the means of making serious impressions on their mind. May they read it

not only as my language, but as their own; and learn to fear the Lord my God, and with me to put their trust under the shadow of his wings for time and for eternity; and may they also learn to adore with me that grace which inclines my heart to enter into the covenant, and condescends to admit me into it, when so inclined; ascribing with me and with all the children of God, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, that glory, honor and praise which is so justly due to each for the part He bears in this illustrious work. AMEN.

"Lord, I am thine, forever thine,
My soul doth cleave to thee;
My dearest Lord, be ever mine,
I have no love but thee.

Henceforth I am not mine, but God's forever.*

"JUST AS I AM."

Just as I am—without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

* This was the form used by Mrs. Ramsay, of Charleston, South Carolina. See her most valuable Life, published by the American Sunday-School Union, p. 27, &c.

Just as I am—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark spot—
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each blot,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—tho' toss'd about,
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within, and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in Thee to find—
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—Thy love I own
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come.

"I LAY MY SINS ON JESUS."

I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all, and frees us
From the accursed load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White in His blood most precious,
Till not a spot remains.

I lay my wants on Jesus,
All fullness dwells in Him;
He heals all my diseases,
He doth my soul redeem.
I lay my griefs on Jesus,
My burdens and my cares;
He from them all releases,—
He all my sorrows shares.

I rest my soul on Jesus,—
This weary soul of mine;
His right hand me embraces,
I on His breast recline.
I love the name of Jesus,
Immanuel, Christ, the Lord;
Like fragrance on the breezes,
His name is poured abroad.

I long to be like Jesus—
Meek, loving, lowly, mild;
I long to be like Jesus,
The Father's only child;
I long to be with Jesus,
Amid the heavenly throng,
To sing, with saints, His praises,
To learn the angels' song.

THE CONSECRATION.

Upon thine altar, Lord, I lay
My poor, my only sacrifice;
Thou wilt not turn thy face away,
Wilt not a broken heart despise.

Though hard as stone, cold as the clod,
Break, for thy tender mercies' sake,
—Not with the vengeance of thy rod,—
But by thy loving-kindness, break.

Break it, and bind it, wound and heal,
Yea, kill to make alive again;
Impress it with Thy Spirit's seal,—
The sacrifice were perfect then.

Perfect, yet all unworthy still:
But while in Jesus I believe,
Who came on earth to do Thy will,
From His dear hands my gift receive.

Receive it, with His blood bedew'd,
Receive it, offer'd with His prayers;
And, in Thine image thus renew'd,
Enroll me with Thy kingdom's heirs.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BELIEVING AND DEVOTED SOUL ENCOURAGED TO MAKE AN OPEN CONFESSION.

AND now, my dear reader, have you gone with me in this surrender of yourself to God, and are you now no longer your own, but "His to whom you have now yielded yourself as His servant to obey Him?" If so, and you are willingly, devotedly, and heartily "THE LORD'S," then CONFESS that you are so before men.

Do not conceal your feelings. Put on a manly courage. Act as you would in every other case. Avail yourself of the principles of your nature already explained, and of the sympathy, experience, and prayers of others, or at least of some one judicious Christian friend. Do not imagine they are uninterested in you, because they have not spoken to you. They may be even now earnestly wrestling with God in prayer for you, and "travailing

in pain," until you are born again, and yet afraid to speak to you, lest they should "speak unadvisedly with their lips" before you. You will find any true Christian bosom thrill with tender and joyful emotions in the knowledge of your hopeful change of feeling, and of your heavenly desires. Their hearts will melt before you. Tears of thankfulness will bedew their cheeks, and there will be joy, not only among the angels of God, but also among the saints on earth. An electric spark will be communicated to your own soul. The fire will burn, and you will thank God for that communion of hearts which can bring with it such overflowing peace.

Be not afraid, therefore, only fear of fear. Be not ashamed, except of that sinful shame which would hinder you from doing what you know to be right, and your duty, and for your happiness. The only difficulty is to make the first approach. All after that, will be easy, pleasant, and profitable. This you can make by letter, if, as is best, you cannot do it by personal communication. But in one or other way do it. I beseech you to do so, let the effort be what it may. Be master of yourself. "Quit

yourself like a man, and be strong," and let no cowardly timidity restrain you. Never did I see a happier man than one who was certainly the most timid and reserved, I ever knew. I perceived in him some evidence of being thoughtful, and sought a private and suitable opportunity to converse with him. He had been most anxious that I should, and yet he found it impossible to introduce the subject. But it was to him like the opening of a spring. The waters that were welled up within the adamantine walls, burst forth. He was relieved of agonizing pressure. He was guided and helped forward, and soon found peace and joy in believing. Very lately, also, I sought an opportunity to "speak to a young man" of a very similar temperament. I invited him to ride with me, and after introducing the subject of religion, found him so eager to converse, that after approaching his home, we remained some time in earnest communication, and when I told him his dinner hour was past, "Oh," said he, "that is of no consequence, I could listen all day to what you have to say."

But oh, how inexpressible is the delight of a faithful pastor's bosom, when any of his flock

—of the sheep or lambs he is to feed— come to him, and in the confidence of love and respect, open up to him their feelings, and seek his counsel and prayers. It is like a burst of sunshine on a stormy day. He can lift up his eyes to heaven and say, "I thank Thee, O Father in heaven, that whilst these things are hid from so many of the wise and prudent, Thou hast revealed them unto these."

During the past winter, I was gratified by several such visits, from young persons of both sexes. One day I was busy sermonizing, when a visitor—a young gentleman in large business—was announced. He was introduced. I was unnerved at his presence. He had been for years altogether a man of the world, and very careless about the Sabbath and the sanctuary. I had ventured to talk with him a few days previously, sitting on a box of goods in his store, but had no hope of any immediate religious feelings. He had intended leaving the city on a collecting tour, the morning after I saw him, but was very *unexpectedly*, that is, providentially, hindered. Strange feelings came over him. He knew not what to make of them, or why they

should be felt. Thoughts of a departed father, who had been very pious, haunted even his dreams, and seemed to call him to repent and pray, and change his course of living. He tried to read the Bible, but could not. He went down on his knees to pray, but knew not how, and thought it was only mockery. He thought he would come and see me, and was on his way, when Satan led him to think he was making a fool of himself, and that these feelings would soon subside. He turned back and busied himself in his store. But he could not get rid of his feelings, and finally he had come to see me and make known to me these facts. "And now," said he, "I wish you to tell me just what you think I ought to do." We talked long together, as we have since. I gave him a book to read, made prayer with him, and we separated, both full, I trust, of joy imparted by the Holy Ghost, for there is every reason to hope he was "led," like the Ethiopian eunuch, "by the Spirit," and will become an active and devoted Christian.

Let me, then, persuade you, my dear reader, to "go and do likewise." Unburthen yourself by allowing some Christian friend to share

your burden with you, and to help to relieve you of it.

And while you thus make a special confidant and guide of some one friend, or of your pastor,—to whom it will be the greatest honor you can confer upon him,—let your general change of views and desires be known in your domestic circle.

Let it be known in your family, and to your friends and acquaintances. Tell them of your position. Come out from among the worldly and thoughtless and be separate. Confess your faith also before the world.

This is God's own plan of becoming Christ's disciples, denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and following Him, acknowledging that we are weak, infirm, unworthy, and undeserving sinners, and that all our righteousness, and hope, and help, are in the Lord Jesus Christ. If, my dear reader, thou shalt thus "confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Conscience may condemn you, guilt may alarm you, and Satan tempt you to doubt and fear, but do not despair—

hope still. No guilt ever exceeded the merits of Christ's blood; nor has any sin ever yet conquered the invincible power of his grace. In all thy temptations be not discouraged. These surges are intended not to draw you from Him, but to sweep away from you every filthy rag of self-confidence, and lead you to stand firm and immoveable on Christ your rock. He is the temple, altar, priest, and sacrifice, to whom every sinner may come, and none but sinners can come; and to whom they are to come, not that they may offer an atoning sacrifice, but that they may trust in His sacrifice and blood "which cleanseth from all sin." Christ's blood secures reconciliation for the ungodly, (Col. i. 20;) cleansing for the polluted, (1 John i. 7;) purchase from the slavery of Satan, (Acts xx. 28;) redemption from the curse, (1 Peter i. 18;) purging from our condemning conscience, (Heb. ix. 13, 14;) remission of all our sins, (Heb. x. 16, 17;) the glorious liberty of the children of God, (Rom. viii. 21;) a complete and everlasting justification before the law and justice of God, (Rom. v. 9;) and peace, liberty, and boldness towards God as our Father in heaven, (Eph. ii. 13.) O how rich,

how free, how all-sufficient, is the grace of Christ! It is, indeed, high as heaven from which it comes and to which it brings; deep as hell from which it delivers; and broader than the earth, since it not only makes propitiation for all the sins of all men, but brings life and security to angels, and "glory to God in the highest."

It is, therefore, as you perceive, of the very essence of belief and trust in Christ, to renounce as dross all our privileges, obedience, duties, graces, tears, and efforts, and to look for salvation to nothing but Christ. It is to feel that Christ Himself is the free gift of God, and cannot be secured by merit —that faith also is "the gift of God," (Eph. ii. 8;) and that pardon also is His "free gift," (Rom. v. 16.) Look to Christ, then, O sinner. Look to Him and "thou shalt be saved," (Isa. xlv. 22.) Believe on Christ and thou shalt not be ashamed. Come to Him and thou shalt find rest. "Abide in Him," and thou shalt secure a refuge from every doubt, and fear, and trembling thought. Sinner, there is no other Saviour, no other foundation, no other hope set before thee, no other refuge.

Look then to Him, and thou art secure; look to any thing else and thou art undone. It is only "IN CHRIST" that God is gracious, reconciling and forgiving. IN CHRIST ALONE God is "plenteous in mercy," bound by covenant grace, and pledged by many precious promises, to receive all that come to Him, and to cast out none.

To be in Christ, then, by an absolute surrender of the soul to God in dependence on His merits and mercy, and to have Christ "formed in our souls," by a heartfelt faith in the word and promise of God, and by the sanctifying application of them by the Holy Spirit;—this is the hope of glory,—this is salvation,—"this is eternal life."

Fear not, then, O thou who art willing to be Christ's, to believe and to trust in Him, and to look to Him for ALL thy salvation and ALL thy desire. HE will restore with the Spirit of meekness. (Gal. vi. 1.) HE will bear all thy burdens. (Gal. vi. 2.) HE will give "grace upon grace;"—grace to secure pardon, grace to inspire hope, grace to believe, grace to impart peace, "grace sufficient for every time of need." He will forgive not only once, but seven times,

not only seven times, but seventy times seven—that is, every time you sin and look to Him for pardon. "He that believeth shall be saved," and he only that "believeth not is condemned already," and must remain under the wrath of God, because "he believeth not on the Son of God." Such is the offer, and the dread alternative, of the gospel.

But it is no less true and important to be remembered that he that believeth in Christ must also confess Him before men, or else his faith is dead and profiteth nothing. Christ divides all men into the two classes—those that confess Him, and those that confess Him not; and He says, "Him that confesses me I will confess, and him that denieth me, that is ashamed of me, and that will not follow me, I will deny." "There are few that be saved," says one prophet, "One of a city, and two of a family," says another. "Oh, my soul! thou art, then, with God, or thou art far away from Him! Thou art converted, or thou art not! Thou dost either confess Christ, or deny Him! One of these two sides thou hast taken, and which is it? Art thou in the narrow path of life? or art thou in the broad way to perdi-

tion? Oh, my soul! this is worth consideration. Examine thyself; prove thyself; seek, and ascertain clearly. Examine thyself, whether thou art in the faith.

You feel ashamed at the sight of your own unworthiness. And well you may. But you may not, and ought not to feel ashamed of Christ, nor ashamed of thyself, seeing that He was made shame for you, that all your shame being taken away, washed in the laver of regeneration, sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and covered over with His righteousness, you may be presented unto God without spot or blemish, or any such thing. While in yourself, therefore, there is nothing but shame and self-reproach, in Christ there is nothing but glorying, and boldness, and confidence towards God. Of yourself you cannot think too meanly, but of Him you cannot think too highly. Of yourself you cannot think too little, but of Him you cannot think too much. Of yourself you cannot fear and doubt too much, but you cannot labor too much for Him, nor have too great confidence in Him, nor indulge too exalted expectations of good from Him.

But you doubt and distrust your best thoughts and purposes, and imagine you have

no real faith or love, because you find within you so much and so frequent doubting. But you ought to know, from the very working of the heart about that which is most dear to it, that there may be some doubting where there is strong faith and real love, and some faith and love even where those doubtings and jealousies are greatest. There may be much smoke while there is little or no perceptible flame, and yet that smoke cannot exist without some fire to sustain it. And thus also a man cannot doubt and fear, and be jealous over himself with an anxious jealousy, without some faith and love and appreciation of Christ. To be convinced that you are a sinner, and that you believe not and love not as you know you should, is itself some evidence of the Spirit's working in your heart, since it is His mission to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The ignorant man is always the confident, undoubting man. Doubting implies knowledge of self, of God, of sin, and of Christ. And although faith and love are feeble and faint in proportion to our doubts, yet these doubts are proof positive of more or less faith, and love, and hope.

Let not thy fears or doubts, therefore, lead

thee to distrust, despondency, or despair. Your safety is in Christ, not in yourself. He is your ark, and around Him is the everlasting rainbow of promise and of preservation. The floods may swell and rise higher and higher, until they reach the clouds. All your sins, like mountain billows, may go over you. But they cannot overwhelm Him in whom you trust and hope, and who is as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast. Only abide in Him. Think only of His power, sufficiency and grace, and the inheritance is as sure to you as the promise.

But you feel so much deadness and hardness of heart and insensibility of feeling. This is to be expected as the result of your own mental exercises. You are required to will, and to do, to deny yourself, to take up your cross and follow Christ by doing whatsoever He hath commanded. Do then all that you are required, and just as it is required. Though it be but lamely, still walk in the ways of His commandments. Lie not still. Awake thou that sleepest. It is not your condition, but your duty that ought now to engage your attention. Neither is it what *you feel disposed* to do, but

what Christ would have you to do, that you ought to do with all your might. Work, then, "the work of God." Walk in His prescribed ways humbly and sincerely. "Take up your bed and walk" at His bidding. His word is power. Stretch out, then, your hand, though it be withered. Wait on the Lord, who "meeteth him that worketh righteousness, those that remember Him in all their ways," and "to as many as believe on Him, giveth power to become the sons of God."

You want to love, and you ask me how you are to love. I answer, believe—trust—obey—follow Christ. But how are you to do that? I answer, love Him for all He is, and for all He has done, and for all He ever lives to perform in and for you. Believe much and you will love much. Love much and you will believe much. Let Him who is altogether lovely, and who IS LOVE, and whose love and pity brought Him down to save rebellious worms, fill your vision, your thoughts, and your desires and this will enkindle a flame of love and faith in the coldest heart. Dwell on His love with sweet accord. Think how much you ought to love Him, how much you desire to love Him,

and how little you do actually love Him, and "He will not leave you comfortless." He "will come to you." He will so "shed abroad His love in your heart," as to constrain you to love Him, and to live not unto yourself, but unto Him who died and gave Himself for you, and rose again that he may be with you always even unto the end."

This is the true and only way to attain to a peaceful assurance. Simple trust and reliance on Christ and His promised grace, and a faithful endeavor to please Him by walking in His ways and obeying His commands, this will bring with it a peace whereof all the world cannot deprive us, and against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. The reflex exercise and sensible enjoyment, of assurance, is a gift bestowed when, and in what measure it pleaseth Christ. But this direct confidence in Him, reliance on His promise, and assurance of His all-sufficiency—this is your privilege, nay, duty, at all times,—even when you are least sensible of the happy enjoyment of faith, and hope and love. When you feel that in yourself you are nothing, cast yourself, with all your burdens, on the Lord. Do not wait until you feel as

you would wish. Do not say, if the promise and the grace were only mine, and Christ my Saviour, I could trust and believe. This is to invert God's order, and all rational order. This is to make a Saviour of your experience and feelings, and to substitute them for Christ and His promises, and to build your hope on them and not on Christ as the only foundation laid in Zion. Rather say, Christ offers Himself to me, His promise is to me, His grace is sufficient for me, all are held forth to me in the gospel, and therefore I cannot doubt or fear, since with all my heart, I receive and embrace them. "I had fainted," says David, "unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord." And so will you faint unless, in the same way, you first believe, and then expect to realize "the goodness of the Lord." Hope in the Lord first, and then "thou shalt praise Him for the help of His countenance." Add, then, to your faith, meekness, patience, diligence, activity, devotion, obedience; and in thus doing His will, you shall come to know, in your own joyful experience, the peace that passeth all understanding.

"There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."
PROV. xviii. 24.

One there is above all others—
O how He loves!
His is love beyond a brother's—
O how He loves!
Earthly friends may fail or leave us,
One day soothe, the next day grieve us,
But this Friend will ne'er deceive us—
O how He loves!

'Tis eternal life to know Him—
O how He loves!
Think, O think how much we owe Him,
O how He loves!
With His precious blood he bought us,
In the wilderness He sought us,
To His fold He safely brought us—
O how He loves!

We have found a friend in Jesus—
O how He loves!
'Tis His great delight to bless us—
O how He loves!
How our hearts delight to hear Him,
Bid us dwell in safety near Him;
Why should we distrust or fear Him,
O how He loves!

Through His name we are forgiven—
O how He loves!
Backward shall our foes be driven—
O how He loves!

Best of blessings He 'll provide us,
Nought but good shall e'er betide us,
Safe to glory He will guide us—
O HOW HE LOVES!

CHRIST THE ROCK OF AGES.

Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee:
Let the water and the blood,
From the wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labour of my hands,
Can fulfill the law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All my sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Vile, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my heart-strings break in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment-throne,
Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.

CHAPTER VII.

OBLIGATION AND IMPORTANCE OF A PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH.

Have you, then, done this, and are you now in Christ, trusting to Him, and to Him alone, for salvation? Or are you now ready to do this? Then, if you are, it is your duty to confess Christ before men. You must make a public profession of this self-renunciation, and this devotion to Christ. You must thus put yourself under Christ's care, that he may instruct, comfort, and guide you, and that you may be useful to Him and to his cause. Without this, you are told by the Apostle your faith is not right, but dead, and that you cannot be saved. (Rom. x. 9–11.) This, as we have seen, is in perfect accordance with the constitution of our nature, the arrangements of society, and our own conduct in reference to every event and business of life. Where there is feeling and faith in the heart, it will reveal itself by words,

by writing, and by actions corresponding to them. It would not be enough—to resume our former illustration—to make a written engagement with your betrothed, in order to marriage. That engagement must be sealed by a public and solemn contract. And just so is it in your relation to God in Christ. When there is faith and love in the heart, it will manifest itself in our conversation, and in our private, personal dedication to Him. But it will do more. It will seek the consummation of our union to Christ. Of that union, marriage was instituted as a type and representation. Christ represents himself as the husband, and his people as the bride. "Thy Maker is thy husband." "Hearken, therefore, O daughter, forsake also thine own kindred and thy father's house. So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty, for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him." Even, therefore, as the loving heart seeks in a public contract the recognition and ratification of its union with the object of its fond devotion, so does every believer's heart desire, by a public, solemn covenant, to seal and testify its union to the Lord Jesus Christ, and its grateful willingness to be His, His only, His wholly, and

His forever. Love cannot slumber in cold reserve where there is love, and loveliness, and an open hand and heart to welcome it. Faith cannot exist like dying embers buried up under the ashes of a selfish worldliness, when the Refiner stands by to fan those dying embers into flame, feed them with oil and fuel, and blow upon them with the inspiring breath of His divine life. And it would, therefore, be as unnatural, as it is impossible, for any man truly to believe on Christ and not feel that faith, like a hot coal, burn within him and consume his very bones, until it finds vent in the full flame of active, consecrated zeal and devotion to His service. A man may, indeed, be so ignorant as not to know the full nature of his privilege and duty, and in this condition be disposed, like Nicodemus, to remain in obscurity and inactivity. But while God may wink at this ignorance, He will not allow it to remain. He will cause the light in some way to shine upon it and irradiate it, that he who was shrouded in ignorance may walk forth in the glorious liberty of the children of God.

A gentleman once came to my study, who was in this condition. He had lived beyond middle

life in the world and in sin, and by a remarkable providence was brought to consideration and conversion. But he was profoundly ignorant of the Gospel, and indeed of the Bible, and he thought he might go on in his endeavors to be and to live a Christian, and yet retain his convictions to himself. But while he was thus privily minded, God had otherwise arranged his future. He was brought to hear me at night on an occasion, when I, a perfect stranger to him, was led to preach on the character and conduct of Nicodemus as coming to our Saviour by night. It was enough. It was like the light of the sun shining into a dark chamber. He saw his sin and folly, his ignorance and his suicidal course. He waited upon me, unbosomed his whole heart, and with eyes streaming with tears, and his whole frame excited by deep emotion, expressed his earnest desire to know all his duty, to take up all the cross, and to follow Christ at whatever sacrifice of interest and feeling. And this he did. He became a diligent student of the Scriptures. He lived in prayer, and even the midnight hour was made vocal with his songs of praise and his utterances of humble supplication. He became

a member of the church, lived a life so unblameable as to put to silence even his previous companions in sin, and died triumphant in faith, a ruling elder in the church.

And so, my dear reader, will it, MUST it, be with you.

When Count Zinzendorf was advanced in life, he happened to be in Geneva, on a visit, and being required to address some children there, he said:—"My dear children: I will tell you what I did when I was very young. I was told that my Creator had become man from love to me; and it made a deep impression on me. I thought with myself, 'If my compassionate Lord should have no other person to love him, at least I will cleave to him, and live and die with him.' Many an hour have I spent in conversing with Him, as one speaks to a dear and honored friend. But still at that time I did not know the amount of what I owed Him. Alas! I did not know the merits of a bleeding, dying Saviour, who had made an offering for my sins, till on a certain day, when the whole truth of what my Creator had borne on my account flashed vividly before my mind. At first I burst into tears, and could not restrain my-

self; it was so wondrous good of Him: and then I made a solemn covenant with him, to live to him, and love him more than I had ever done. I have now spent upwards of fifty years in daily intercourse with my Saviour, and feel myself every day happier." What a testimony was this! Alas, how few have made religion such a thorough work! Zinzendorf's covenant was a very short and simple one—"Dear Saviour, be Thou mine, and I will be Thine."

When Zinzendorf was an old grey-haired man, he revisited the scenes of his boyish days; and there was not a tree, nor a rock, nor a single spot that did not remind him of the sweet intercourse which he had enjoyed in prayer with his God. Under that tree he had first learned to submit his will to God. While walking in that green lane he had first discovered that the redeemed from among men would be as pure and as free from sin in heaven as the holiest angels. When the last rays of the setting sun tinged yonder blue hill, and the orb was seen no more till it rose next morning on the other side, he used to think with rapture of death, when the day's work will be done, and of the glorious resurrection-morn, when the body

shall arise to shine in heaven, and, as a sun, set no more.

The first time he partook of the Lord's supper was to him a solemn season. He bound himself anew to his beloved Lord with an indissoluble covenant. Twenty years later he writes: "The transactions of that day are as vivid in my recollection as if it had been yesterday; and the assurance which I found on that day I have never lost."

Augustine, in his Confessions, tells us of a great man at Rome, named Victorinus, many of whose friends were heathen. When God in his rich mercy converted him to the Christian religion, he came privately to Simplicianus, and informed him that he had become a Christian. Simplicianus answered, "I will not believe thee to be a Christian till I see thee openly profess it in the church." Victorinus jeeringly replied, "What! do the church walls make a Christian?" and went his way. But when, in perusing the Scriptures, he came to those words of Christ, (Mark viii. 38,) "Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he

cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels," he returned to Simplicianus and openly professed his faith and trust in Christ.

Let this declaration, then, equally impress *your* mind; for, assuredly, if even in the face of persecution and death, men were under imperative obligation to confess Christ, no *possible* excuse can justify any man now in withholding himself from the ranks of Christ's disciples, since this is made necessary by the very relation in which you stand to Christ, and in which Christ stands to you. "He that is not with me," says Christ, "is against me." Every man, therefore, is either THE FRIEND, or he is THE ENEMY of Christ,—every man is either on the side of God, and of "the seed of the woman," or on the side of Satan, and of "the seed of the serpent." And hence we find, that in the very closing page of Revelation, (Rev. xxi. 8,) "*the fearful*" are put in the very fore-front of those "who shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," because, like all the rest, they "reject the counsel of God against themselves," "obey not the truth," and, instead of "submitting themselves to the righteousness of

God, go about to establish a righteousness of their own."

Faith in Christ will infallibly produce love to Christ, and love to Christ will make the heart willing to "run in the way of His commandments." Hence the first cry of the believing soul is, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" and the first exclamation of all who hear his words, see his zeal, and witness his devotion, is, "Behold, he prayeth."

Of this I will give you a very striking illustration, in the case of Mr. Baker, a deist, of Cincinnati.* His mind being opened to the truth while on a sick-bed, after prayer he said that he desired to make a *declaration*. No one understood what he designed to do. The curiosity of all present being excited, they rose and approached his bed, when with the deepest solemnity he expressed himself as follows:— "I wish to make a declaration in the presence of my family and of these witnesses. I now declare before you all, that I am convinced of the error I have advocated for twenty years past. I believe there is such a being as Jesus Christ.

* See Tract 373, A. T. S.

I believe he is the Son of God. I believe he is the only name by which we can be saved."

Referring to the uncertainty of life, although he expected to recover, he added: "Whether I shall survive my present sickness or not, such I wish you to understand is my full belief. *I repent of my error.* I wish you, sir, to use this, my declaration, to comfort or strengthen Christians, as you may judge best. If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, Christians on earth will rejoice also. *I do repent.* Such are the sentiments I believe, and mean to support and defend while I live."

At this time Mr. Baker was thought to be recovering; but his disease returning, he requested earnestly to have the Lord's supper administered unto him. "This," says the clergyman who gives the account, "was to me a startling request. I was fearful that he had wrong views of the nature of this ordinance, and, like many others, might think, through its influence, to obtain the pardon of sin. Some questions were proposed to him, for the purpose of drawing out his views of this institution. Immediately he drew my head down and whispered in my ear, as he was unable to speak

aloud without much effort and pain. He said that he regarded the Lord's Supper simply as a symbol of the Saviour's sufferings—he did not think there was any efficacy in it to save from sin, and that he did not expect by it to receive forgiveness of his sins, for he trusted only in the blood of Christ for salvation. But his reasons for desiring to receive this ordinance were as follows:—

"For twenty years, he had denied publicly that there ever was such a being as Jesus Christ. Had he lived, he designed to have made a public profession of his faith in Him, and thus undo, as far as possible, the evil he had done. But now he was about to die without the privilege of making a public profession of religion. He therefore desired to make as public a manifestation of his faith in Christ as he could in his situation, and once before he died, if it could consistently be done, to partake of the Lord's Supper."

We might illustrate the same truth from the history of Augustine himself. Never was man more hopelessly cut off from salvation by pride, by unbelief, by errors in doctrine, by vain philo-

sophy, by carnal lusts, than was the young philosopher and libertine of Carthage. Oh! how he grieved and afflicted the heart of that poor, bereaved, widowed, but believing mother, Monica, who yearned over him as her only child; and oh! how dreadful his impiety, which led him to fly from her to Rome; and how heavenly her hope, which led her to fly after him, that she might bring him to Christ.

At length, through persevering prayer, and the clear exhibitions of sacred truth, accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, this man of pride, of sensuality, of unhallowed ambition, and supreme selfishness, was brought low in the dust of humiliation before God; and, like Saul of Tarsus, was led to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. He now felt the absolute necessity, the infinite value of such a Saviour. He was filled with peace in believing; and in the language of the Psalmist, he delighted to pour forth thanksgivings to Him who had delivered him from the dominion of sin. In the fullness of his joy he exclaimed, "O Lord! I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid;

thou hast loosed my bonds; O Lord, who is like unto thee! I will offer to thee the sacrifice of praise continually!"

Having been admitted into the church, he resolved to return at once, with his mother, to Africa, that the theatre of his former blindness, his follies, his crimes, and his protracted impenitence, might witness the sincerity of his conversion, and the omnipotent power of Divine truth and grace; and that he might proclaim to his own countrymen that Redeemer whom he had so ungratefully dishonored. Oh! if we had many Monicas, we would still have many Augustines, and our sons and our daughters would not only believe on Christ, but rejoice to bear any and every cross for love to His name.

Do you, then, my dear reader, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you believe that He is able and willing to save you—JUST AS YOU ARE—with your cold, unfeeling, hard, guilty, and sinful heart; and do you cast yourself unreservedly on his mercy, and trust in Him alone for salvation? Then come thou and do likewise. CONFESS CHRIST WITH YOUR MOUTH. Profess him before the church and the world; and observe and do in remembrance of His

divinity, his grace and mercy, and his all-atoning blood and righteousness, what He has commanded. Having given your own heart to the Lord, give yourself also to his church and cause, according to the will of God; and as a pledge of your love and devotion, come to THE TABLE OF THE LORD.

This is what you ought to render unto the Lord for all his mercies—"take the cup of salvation into your own hands, and pay unto him your vows now, in the presence of the congregation." This is the plain and imperative duty of all who have the opportunity of doing it, and its neglect can admit of no excuse which would not equally excuse you for not believing on Christ with the heart. What fits you, fellow-sinner, to come to Christ himself, and to hope and trust in Him, fits you to come to Christ's table; and as it regards both,

> "The only fitness Christ requireth
> Is, to feel your need of Him."

There is, and can be, no other fitness nor worthiness in any man, since we are all guilty, and and since there is no power in any man to make himself either fitter or better, seeing that it

was "because we are without strength Christ died for the ungodly."

Blessed be God, fellow-sinner, ALL GRACE is treasured up in Christ; grace to pardon, grace to pacify, grace to purify, grace to edify, grace to sanctify, and grace to triumph by. To believe in Christ is to believe, therefore, that in Him is all that we need, and to draw living water out of this WELL OF SALVATION, by the help of those means Christ himself has given us, not that we may trust in them, but that we may be led by them to trust wholly and solely in Him to whom they refer, and on whom they depend for all their efficacy. Now, prayer is one of these means; confession of our sins, humiliation on account of them, and turning away from them is another; reading the Scriptures is another; attendance on the public services of religion is another; converse with Christians is another; charity, liberality, and activity in well-doing, is another; public profession is another; and participation of the Lord's Supper is one of the most precious and important of these means. To return to the figure of Christ as the well of salvation. The well is deep, and its riches so "unsearchable

and past our finding out," that it is only by these means of grace we can let down our faith and draw forth the living, saving, and purifying grace.

Every one, therefore, who is "living," as it regards his hopes of salvation, "by the faith of the Son of God," and is daily looking to Him, by humble faith and prayerful reliance, for "grace and mercy according to his need," is fit and prepared to come profitably to the Lord's table. If, then, poor doubting soul, thou hast laid hold of Christ, thou hast all that God can give thee, and all that God will require of thee. God will have nothing else, and asks for nothing else. Nothing will do thee good, or satisfy conscience, or take away sin, but Christ, who "found a ransom," (Job xxxiii. 24;) "in whom God is well pleased," (Matt. iii. 17;) and in whom God is reconciling sinners unto himself. God does all you want and will bestow all you need, as a guilty and hopeless sinner, for Christ's sake. "He giveth grace and glory, and withholdeth no good thing" from them that are in Christ. They have peace with God. They have access to God. They rejoice in hope of the glory of

God. They joy also in God. He is their merciful Father, and they are the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. In themselves they deserve rejection, wrath, and hell. In Christ they are made worthy of acceptance, pardon, and life, and to as many as do really believe on him, Christ as really gives power to become the sons of God. They are adopted into God's family. They "are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and members of the household of God," and are freely welcome to a hearty enjoyment of all the privileges, promises, and ordinances of this heavenly family.

Do you then, my dear reader, say that you can believe in Christ, and be a Christian, as well without a profession and without the sacrament as with it? Then you make God, who has so positively ordered otherwise, a liar, and the truth cannot be in you. Your faith is dead. Your love is cold as indifference itself. You have not charity. The love of Christ constrains you not. You have no regard for the honor of God, the glory of Christ, and the salvation of souls. Shame, or fear, or unbelief, rule in your heart. You are openly disobeying God, and

refusing that acquiescence which God requires —which the interests of religion demand— which is essential to the very existence of the church—and which love to Christ imperiously requires.

Do you say it is a very solemn engagement, and you shrink from committing yourself for life? Ah! my dear friend, does this prevent you, would it prevent you, from entering into any civil or social relationship, or into the marriage union even though made with a weak and fallible mortal, and although it involves all your interests for body and mind through every period of life? And will you tell God that you can trust "a worm of the dust," but that you are afraid to trust Him who is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely; Him who is as willing as he is able to save to the uttermost all that trust in him; Him who is as willing to carry on, and to perfect, as He is to begin, the work of grace in their hearts; and Who is able to keep that soul which is committed unto Him until the day of redemption.

Do you say that you are afraid you may hereafter abandon or disgrace your profession? Verily if such is thy spirit, thy "heart

is not right." You still distrust God, disbelieve in Christ, and question the sincerity and ability of the Holy Spirit. You still cleave secretly to the world, and make provision for future sin, and future worldliness. You are "striving to serve two masters, God and Mammon,"—the world and Christ. You are endeavoring to keep your feet on the two different vessels of the world and the church, and you will inevitably fall between them into the gulf beneath. Or if this is too severe and harsh a judgment, and you are restrained by what you believe sincere and proper feelings, then they are mistaken. They lead you to look to yourself for strength to persevere, and not to Christ who "loves to the end those whom he loves." You forget that "He is faithful, who has promised and cannot deny himself," and that He will "keep by His power, through faith, unto salvation," all who put their trust in Him. You forget that "neither life nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any thing else, (no possible contingency,) can separate from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Either, therefore, you do not *sincerely* wish and de-

sire to be and to live as a Christian, or you are allowing yourself to be led away by the old but still common error of "going about to establish some righteousness of your own, rather than submit and trust altogether to the righteousness of God"—to save yourself rather than to be saved. Or have you hitherto proudly opposed religion, and reviled its weak and halting professors, and are you now ashamed to retract your avowals, to recant your "ungodly speeches," to identify yourself with these inconsistent and halting professors, and to humble yourself to apply at the door of the church for admission to it? Most sure it is that "the pride of life" still reigns within you; that you are ashamed of Jesus; that you cannot brook the contumely of His cross; and that you are therefore "in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity," since you prefer the pleasures of sin for a season rather than suffer afflictions with the people of God, and the honor that cometh from man to that honor which cometh from God.

Do you say you can discharge all the duties of a Christian, and yet remain as you are? You contradict Christ, who says, "if any man

will be my disciple, let him take up his cross, and deny himself, and follow me;" and you contradict the apostle Paul, who says, "that this is the word of faith which is preached to sinners—that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe on him in thine heart, thou shalt be saved," and it is thus manifest that "you have neither part nor lot in the matter."

Do you say the Lord's Supper is only an outward ordinance, and not in itself necessary to salvation? I answer, *first*, that were it altogether such, nevertheless love and gratitude would say, "inasmuch as my gracious Redeemer has made this observance a mark and evidence of love, I will observe it even more scrupulously than if it were *in and of itself* essential to my spiritual welfare." But, I answer, *secondly*, that this ordinance is not wholly outward, but is a seal of the covenant, a pledge of mercy, a token of love, a means of strengthening our hearts, and a season of special presence, communion, and merciful dispensation on the part of Christ, and of the blessed Comforter. It is THE LORD'S SUPPER, and as oft as we eat this bread and

drink this wine, He is with us always, unto the end of the world.

Do you say I am not fit yet to go to the Lord's table? "You know not what spirit you are of." Thou art saying, "I will become rich and increase in goods, so as to have need of nothing," and then I will come, "and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." "I counsel thee, therefore," says Christ, "to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed; that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Not only those who remain "without," are excluded from the benefits of the marriage feast, but he also who comes there without the "wedding garment," and in his own dress, and who is not willing to sit down covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, received as a gift at Christ's hands. To say you are not fit to come to the Lord's table, is either therefore to say that you are sinful, which is the very reason why Christ became your Saviour, and has provided this means of grace; or it is to say that you do not wish to come there as a sinner, saved and sanctified alto-

gether by grace, and in this sense it is to trust for fitness to your own righteousness, your own duties, and efforts, and attainments, which is a rejection of Christ. In so saying, therefore, you forget that you should come to Christ's table in order that you may build your hope and confidence on the love and grace of God in Christ; that you may find strong consolation in reposing on Christ's infinite righteousness and merits; that you may see all your guilt and defilement and sin washed away in the fountain of Christ's blood; and that you may there renounce self, trample on all self-righteous hopes and dependence, and "being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But you want more faith in order to go to the table of the Lord? and where, dear reader, are you to get this faith, but by coming to Him who is "the author and the finisher of our faith," and who has instituted this ordinance for the very purpose of imparting, by means of it, faith, and peace, and humility, and love, and joy, to poor and needy souls. Come, then, to the Lord's table, because the Lord of the table invites you there, and because he

says, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Remember thy sins and Christ's pardonings; thy ill-deserts and Christ's merits; thy weakness and Christ's strength; thy pride, Christ's humility; thy many infirmities, Christ's restorings; thy guilt, Christ's new applications of his blood; thy failings, Christ's assistance; thy wants, Christ's fullness; thy temptations, Christ's tenderness; thy vileness, Christ's righteousness. Blessed soul! whom Christ shall thus find among the guests of his table, not having on his own righteousness, (Phil. iii. 9;) but having his robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb, (Rev. vii. 14.)

Do you admit that you have now very different views of God, yourself, life, death and eternity from what you once had—and that it is now the abiding, predominating desire of your heart to be a true, living, loving and devoted Christian, sanctified and made holy by the power of Christ and his Holy Spirit?—why then are you afraid to commit yourself to an open profession, or even to hope that you are a Christian, or to hope in Christ's word? Is not this

unbelief? Are not these evidences and proofs that "He who hath wrought them for the self-same thing, is God," and that you therefore belong to God? Are not these manifestations of Divine love, fruits of the Holy Spirit in your experience, decided testimonies of supernatural religion in your soul. And yet you have never owned it,—nay, hang back and refuse to admit the fact, fear it is not for *you*, and reject the comforts that seem poured down into your soul. A thousand *ifs* and *buts*, and scruples are offered to the kindest inquiries and most affectionate expostulations that can be presented to you, either in public or in private. There has been grace enough to convince you of sin, to show you your ruin, and to make you willing to accept of a precious Saviour; and yet unbelief has refused the inference, and unbelief has rejected the comforts which really belong to every wakened sinner. And when your character has been portrayed, and your experience described, and your state before God so compared with Scripture, that your judgment, your mind, your knowledge have been obliged to admit this is you, and the preacher has announced it as the description of

a Christian, you have said after all—"Not for me." You reject the comforts; and let me tell you, this is "provoking God to jealousy." Oh! is it true that often upon your knees you have deplored your wretchedness before God, cried out for mercy, and sought salvation at His hand, often at His house, and in His word, seen the evidences of grace in the heart to be your own, and yet still say after all—"I doubt whether it is for me?" Oh! fellow-sinner, you are "provoking the Lord to jealousy." Wonder not, then, if He suspends the comforts of the gospel. Wonder not if He sends still darker things in personal experience. "Oh! but," says you, "I am afraid of presumption." "Oh! but," says you, "I am afraid lest after all it should not belong to me; lest after all I should turn out a hypocrite, deceiving myself, and perish in my own gainsaying." Shall I tell you, beloved, what would be the sure and solid ground upon which you might dismiss such scruples, and upon which you might draw the inferences, which should afford peace and comfort to the mind of a child of God? If thou hast seen thyself, (O Holy Ghost, I pray Thee, apply this,)—if thou

hast seen thyself a wretch, deserving hell, and hast discovered that all thou dost want is in Christ, and art really willing to accept of it as the gift of God, and to submit your whole body, soul, and spirit to God in Christ, for life and for death, for time and for eternity, for sanctification as well as for justification, to live in Him and for Him, and in entire dependence on Him, then thou art a Christian, and then the comforts of the Gospel are thine, the witnessings of the Spirit are thine, the ordinances, and especially the Supper of the Lord are thine, and in rejecting them thou art "provoking the Lord to jealousy."

It is a terrible thought, and as true as it is terrible, that a man may still be guilty of crucifying Christ, and bring down upon his soul the fearful guilt of His blood. It is related of Clodoveyus, a king of France, that when he was converted from Paganism to Christianity, while Rhemigius, the bishop, was reading in the gospel concerning the passion of our Saviour, and the abuses He suffered from Judas and the rest of the Jews, he broke out in these words: "O that I had been there with my Frenchmen, I would have put them all to the

sword;" forgetting all the while that by his daily sins he was doing just what they had done. And thus it is, the most of men, all sinful men, condemn the crucifiers of Christ for their cruelty, but never look into themselves, who, by their daily sins, make Him bleed again afresh. The proud man plaits a crown of thorns for His sacred head; the swearer nails His hands and feet; the drunkard gives Him gall and vinegar to drink; the envious man smites Him; the treacherous man sells Him; our hypocrisy is the kiss that betrays Him; the sins of our bodies are the tormentors of His body; and the sins of our souls make His soul heavy unto death; and cause him to remember afresh the withdrawing of His Father's love from Him, when in the heaviness of His anguished soul He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

And if in all these ways men may crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame, with what bolder and more profane hand do they crucify the Son of God, and put Him to open shame, who set at naught that blessed ordinance in which Christ is so evidently "set before us crucified and slain?"—who turn away

from Him, as He himself stands at the head of His own table, and pointing them to His thorn-crowned, bleeding brow, and to His pierced hands and feet and side, in accents of divine compassion says, "Come unto Me and I will give you rest. Do this in remembrance of Me. If ye love Me keep My commandments. For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this wine, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." Oh, my dear reader, is it not manifest that to set at naught such words of love, and such commands of your dying Saviour, is to assume to yourself the guilt of His death, the vengeance for which His blood cries aloud, and madly shouting with His enemies, "Away with Him! away with Him! crucify Him! crucify Him!"—impiously crucify Christ afresh, and put Him to an open shame.

Come then, oh, come to Him. Come to His church. Come to His ordinances. Come to His table. "Only believe," receive and embrace Him, and He will "be made, of God, to your soul, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."

Come with me, reader, unto yonder humble dwelling. There has just entered the cele-

brated Dr. Chalmers. The scene is a low, dirty hovel, over whose damp and uneven floor it is difficult to walk without stumbling, and into which a small window, coated with dust, admits hardly enough of light to enable an eye unaccustomed to the gloom, to discern a single object. A poor old woman, bed-ridden, and almost blind, who occupies a miserable bed opposite the fireplace, is the object of the Doctor's visit. Seating himself by her side, he enters at once, after a few general inquiries as to her health, &c., into religious conversation with her. Alas! it seems all in vain. The mind which he strives to enlighten has been so long closed and dark, that it appears impossible to thrust into it a single ray of light. Still, on the part of the woman, there is an evident anxiety to lay hold upon something of what he is telling her; and encouraged by this, he perseveres, plying her, to use his own expression, with the offers of the gospel, and urging her to trust in Christ. At length she said, "Ah! sir, I would fain do as you bid me, but I dinna ken how; how can I trust in Christ?" "Oh, woman," was his expressive answer, in the dialect of the district, "just *lippen* to Him." "Eh, sir," was the reply, "and is that a'?"

"Yes, yes," was his gratified response; "just lippen to Him, and lean on Him, and you'll never perish." To some, perhaps, this language may be obscure, but to that poor dying woman, it was as light from heaven; it guided her to the knowledge of the Saviour, and there is good reason to believe it was the instrument of ultimately conducting her to heaven. And so, dear reader, will it guide you. It is not easy to give an English equivalent for the word "lippen." It expresses the condition of a person who, entirely unable to support or protect himself, commits his interests, or his life, to safe-keeping of some person or object. Thus, a man crossing a chasm on a plank, *lippens* to the plank; and if it give way, he can do nothing for himself. The term implies, therefore, entire dependence, under circumstances of risk helplessness. As lost and helpless, let me entreat you then, to accept the offer of Christ's hand, Christ's help, Christ's guidance, Christ's deliverance, Christ's all-sufficiency, Christ's promise, and Christ's ordinances, and "just lippen to him," and you will be borne safely over the roaring gulf of perdition, and planted on the rock of ages.

Come to the Lord's table, then, weak and trembling believer, that you may lean on Christ's bosom. "That," says an old divine, "is the gospel ordinance posture in which we should pray, and hear, and perform all duties. Nothing but lying in that bosom will dissolve hardness of heart, and make thee to mourn kindly for sin, and cure a careless spirit, that gangrene in profession. That will humble indeed, and make the soul cordial to Christ, and sin vile to the soul; yea, transform it into the glory of Christ. Never think thou art right as thou shouldst be, a Christian of any attainment, until thou comest to this—always to see and feel thyself lying in the bosom of Christ who is in the bosom of his Father. (John i. 18.) Come and move the Father for near views of Christ, and you will be sure to speed. You can come with no request that pleaseth Him better. He gave him out of his own bosom for that very end, to be held up before the eyes of all sinners as the everlasting monument of his Father's love."

"Do this, then, in remembrance of Christ." Such is the voice of your Lord and Master; and lest you should think it referred only to

the twelve disciples, the apostle Paul assures you that this ordinance is to run parallel with time, and that by it, all who trust in His name are to "show forth Christ's death till he come." How, then, if you have hitherto neglected this ordinance, will you answer for your conduct in the day of the revelation of Christ's righteous judgment? This is a command, remember, which is not couched in any doubtful terms, but plain, positive, and demanding immediate and implicit obedience. No sophistry can darken its meaning, or elude its force. Surely, then, in setting it at naught, you are challenging the authority of God over you, and impiously declaring, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him," instead of saying, "Lord what wouldst thou have me to do?" But "Who art thou, that thus repliest against God?" Who art thou that choosest what Divine commands thou art to obey, and what to treat with contempt, although given by Him who has all power both in heaven and in earth?

Who art thou, that thou puttest away from thee the obligations of this command? Either, dear reader, thou must be a communicant, or a delinquent and a rebel. Either thou must seek

the grace necessary to obey this command, or bring upon thy soul the guilt of violated duty. Unfitness is no excuse. For surely since all the fitness Christ requireth is to feel your need of Him, not to feel this is an aggravation, and not an extenuation of your guilt. Consider well, then, before you incur Divine indignation, and endanger your own salvation, "by openly setting Christ at naught, crucifying him afresh, and putting him to an open shame." For, remember also, that while union to Christ's church, and remembrance of Him in his ordinance, is a duty, it is also an *inestimable privilege*, and God may swear in His wrath, that this privilege, with all of heavenly rest it implies, you shall never enjoy. It may be very true, that you are not *as* loving, *as* believing, *as* strong, *as* sanctified as you should be, but are you willing, by unbelief and rejection of the Divine mercy, to have your name wanting in the book of life? Are you prepared to "sell your birthright," and to write it in a covenant that you have neither part nor lot in Christ or His salvation? When "the Lord comes to count and write up His people," are you willing to find your name omitted, and your inheri-

tance given to a more faithful servant? If not, then you must repent and believe the gospel, and having done this, come with whatever measure of faith and hope you have, to this means which is designed to increase your faith.

The feeling of every awakened and grateful heart must be that of the individual mentioned by Dr. Colton. He had lived as a mere respecter, without becoming a professor of religion. He was now on his dying bed, and expressed an exceedingly earnest desire to make a profession of his faith in Christ, by participating in the Lord's Supper. "Not," said he, "that I think the reception of the Lord's Supper is essential to salvation; but I do feel that if I die without it, I can never be happy, because I shall never forget that there was a command of my Saviour who so unspeakably loved me, and that I never obeyed it."

> "Can we for whom the Saviour bled,
> Careless his heavenly banquet see,
> Nor heed the parting word that said,
> Do this in memory of ME."

This was very strikingly illustrated in the case of the military gentleman to whom I have

alluded. A short time after the interview alluded to, and when he had given the most satisfactory evidence of a thorough change of heart and life, the communion was administered. I had not thought of inviting him to consider the subject of a public profession for some time to come, that his conversion might have full proof in his own experience and in the judgment of others. He had, however, established family worship, and was in the habit of daily religious converse with his former associates. The morning of the communion having arrived, I was seated in the pulpit, arranging for the commencement of the services, when I perceived my friend, now bordering on the allotted period of man's age upon the earth, coming up the pulpit stairs. He was full of earnestness. He who was once timid and fearful as a hare secreting itself from the hounds, was now bold as a lion. What he had counted shame, was now his glory; what had been forced upon him as a hard necessity, was now his choice and his delight; and what he had thought of cherishing as a secret in the recesses of his own heart, he now wished to proclaim from the house-top. He had enlisted under Christ as

his captain of salvation, and he was eager to unfurl "the banner given to him because of the truth," and to "fight manfully the good fight of faith, contending if needs be, even unto blood striving against sin."

He was, therefore, all anxiety, if it were possible, to unite in the communion, and in order to do so, "My dear pastor," said he, "I am ready to stand up before the congregation, confess my past sinful course, avow my present repentance and sorrow, my faith in Christ, and my desire and determination to become one of his followers." But when I informed him that he could commune with us at that time in spirit, but that it would be better for him, as it was according to order in the church, to wait for another communion season, he at once consented and resumed his seat.

Of this fact I could multiply illustrations, but at the hazard of being tedious, will mention one other. It is the case of a highly educated and polished gentleman and one who "lived according to the course of this world," in boastful contempt of the law and authority of God, and acknowledging no other law than the code of fashion and the code of honor. By these

he formed his opinions and moulded his conduct, looking down with contempt upon what he thought the cowardly, mean spirit of religion, and "often," as he told me, "doing what was prohibited by God, *just because God* had forbidden it." He had been a duellist, and but two or three Sabbaths before he saw me, he had spent the day in practicing a younger brother to fight a duel on the following morning! A revival of religion was in progress in our church, of which his father, who is a pious man, was then a member. The Spirit of God had reached his heart while alone in the country, and he had for some time struggled against agonizing convictions, so as on one occasion to induce almost an apoplectic fit.

In this state of mind he visited town, and came with his father to a Thursday evening lecture. I was greatly surprised at seeing him, and still more at his marked attention during the discourse. He remained over Sabbath, and on Monday morning called upon me a humbled, broken-down sinner, seeking for mercy. He told me "that had I known everything in his past life and feelings, I could not have more accurately depicted them, and that he now

wished to come out from the world and live as a Christian."

This, in due course of time, he did, and then stood up in the aisle, in the presence of a large congregation, as one of one hundred and eight persons, including the aged and the young, and among them some eight colored persons, who, —on that hallowed Sabbath, memorable in the history of that church,—entered into covenant with God, by a public profession of their faith in Christ.*

Listen, then, dear reader, to the voice of the Lord. He summons you to quit the standard of error, and to range yourself under that of truth. Come forth, then, from the camp of his adversaries, and enter into that of his friends. Unite yourself to the holy band of patriarchs and prophets, of apostles and martyrs, and all those illustrious men of all ages and countries, who have considered this profession their glory, and have glorified it by their holy lives and triumphant deaths. Why can you not do this? What hinders? The door is open, wide open. The invitation is full, free, universal, and con-

* Of these and other converts, more than twenty are now ministers of the gospel.

firmed by the promise and the oath of God. The command is plain, positive, and paramount. Why then, oh! why will you prefer the sullied, flaunting, heart-mocking, and perishing banners of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the pure, peaceable, purifying, and immortal banner of Christ's everlasting kingdom? Behold the fashion of the world passeth away. Already its grandeur and its delights are fading on your distant view. Soon it will have vanished, and all on earth will be dark, dreary, and full of bitterness. You will close your eyes upon it forever. And then what will remain to you of all the pleasures of sin, the profits of business, the hallucinations of fashion, the vanities and vexations of earth? Nothing but their remembrance, and the everlasting remorse they will carry with them. "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me; and him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise

cast out." "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and YE SHALL FIND REST UNTO YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

On one occasion, the Rev. David Nelson,* related the following incident. He went to the house of a young man of wealth on an evening when the brilliant parlors were filled with the sons and daughters of fashion. After the crowd had dispersed, as he sat alone with the young man, he began to talk with him about the interest of his soul. The man replied, he would gladly become a Christian, if he knew what to do. "Suppose," said Dr. Nelson, "the Lord Jesus stood in this room, and you knew it was the Lord Jesus, and he should look kindly on you, and stretch out his hand towards you, and should say, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,' what would you do?" "I would go to him, and fall down before him, and ask him to save me," was the reply. "But what if your gay young compan-

* Author of "The Cause and Cure of Infidelity."

ions were in the room, and they should point and laugh at you?" "I should not care for that. I should go to the Lord Jesus." "Well, the Lord is really in this room, though you cannot see him, and he stretches out his hand to you, and says, 'Come unto me;' and you should believe what he says in his letter, the Bible, as much as though you heard the words." Soon after this conversation he had the pleasure of meeting this young man at the table of the Lord.

If, then, my dear reader, you believe in Christ, and are willing to give up all for Him, you also will feel that this commandment and ordinance of Christ require your immediate observance. And if, on the other hand, you do not believe in Christ, and are not willing to give up all for Him, then what are you but "a child of wrath," an heir of hell, a captive of the devil, "led by him at his will," dead while you live, and on your way to death everlasting. Oh! be persuaded, then, to give yourself to Christ now, at once, in this thy day, ere the offer of salvation is forever withdrawn. Have you been "*almost* persuaded to be a Christian?" oh! be persuaded *altogether*

to make a full, final, and absolute surrender of your soul to Christ. Believe on Him with the heart, and then come and confess Him with the mouth, and thou shalt not be ashamed. "And now, Lord," let your heart and your lips say, "all my desire is before thee. I am convinced of my duty, and dare no longer disobey. Oh! forgive me, that I have rebelled so long! I have been invited to become thy disciple and to come to thy table, and have foolishly neglected many an opportunity of strengthening and refreshing my soul. I have been commanded to do this in remembrance of Him, who deserves never to be forgotten; and by my refusal and neglect, have at once poured contempt upon the authority, and slighted the love of Him who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

"I bless thee, that I am in some measure sensible of my error; and am come to a resolution, that I will have respect to this, as well as thy other commands. The time past shall suffice me to have lived in the omission of so plain a duty, and the neglect of so glorious a privilege. Oh! keep it upon the imagination of my heart forever; and let me be confirmed

in those good purposes, which thy own Spirit has led me to form, and which no less power than His can help me to keep.

"I am indeed unworthy; but I acknowledge the insufficiency of that plea, against a positive command. I am unworthy, but must not therefore refuse Thy kindness; I hope I am in Christ, who came to seek and to save the unworthy, and who is able to save and sanctify to the very uttermost; and therefore I cannot any longer neglect an ordinance, which is at once so great a duty and so exalted a privilege, and in the use of which I hope to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of my Lord.

"Or, if I have hitherto deceived myself, and walked in a vain show, I now desire to accept of the gospel-offer, to enter into covenant with God, to acknowledge thee, O Father, Son, and Spirit, to be my God, my all, my everlasting portion. In deep humility, upon my bended knees, I now accept an offered Saviour, and call heaven and earth to witness, that, as far I can judge, I am sincere. And this I would declare in the presence of thy people; begging, with some hope and confidence, that I may be accepted now, and found in the number of the faithful at last.

"O direct me in all the steps I am to take, and let me see my way, and follow it, and have comfort in the issue, through the merits and mediation of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen."

Whom dost Thou, dear Redeemer, call
To Thy sweet feast of grace,
Admit into the banquet hall,
And at Thy table place?
'Tis not the proud, the rich, the strong,
With earthly good content,
But sick and weary souls, who long
For nobler nourishment.

Ah! didst Thou, for the pure alone,
The royal feast prepare?
Small were the hope for such a one
As me, to find a share.
But since the blind, the sick, the lame,
Obtain admission free,
I, too, will venture, in God's name,
To join the company.

Yet who would think the guests he sees,
Around that table placed,
Were victims all of foul disease,
With ghastly wounds defaced?
For lo! their generous host provides,
From his full store on high,
For each a shining robe, that hides
All his deformity.

And I, in that bright garment dressed,
Will to the table go;
For, Lord, thou will not scorn a guest,
Because his rank is low.
When others coldly close the door,
Wide flies the gate of grace;
And he who was the least before,
Obtains the highest place.

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

If human kindness meets return,
And owns the grateful tie;
If tender thoughts within us burn,
To feel a friend is nigh:

O shall not warmer accents tell
The gratitude we owe
To Him who died, our fears to quell,
Our more than orphan's wo!

While yet his anguished soul surveyed
Those pangs he would not flee;
What love his latest words displayed,—
"Meet and remember me!"

Remember thee! thy death, thy shame,
Our sinful hearts to share!
O memory, leave no other name
But his recorded there.

WELCOME TO THE TABLE.

This is the feast of heavenly wine,
And God invites to sup;
The juices of the living vine
Were press'd to fill the cup.

Oh, bless the Saviour, ye who eat,
With royal dainties fed;
Not heaven affords a costlier treat,
For JESUS is the bread!

The vile, the lost,—he calls to them;
"Ye trembling souls, appear!
The righteous in their own esteem
Have no acceptance here.

"Approach, ye poor, nor dare refuse
The banquet spread for you;"
Dear Saviour, this is welcome news!
Then I may venture too.

If guilt and sin afford a plea,
And may obtain a place;
Surely the Lord will welcome me,
And I shall see his face.

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

According to thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember thee.

Thy body, broken for my sake,
My bread from heaven shall be;
Thy testamental cup I take,
And thus remember thee.

Gethsemane can I forget?
Or there thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice!
I must remember thee:—

Remember thee, and all thy pains
And all thy love to me;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains,
Will I remember thee.

And when these failing lips grow dumb
And mind and memory flee,
When thou shalt in thy kingdom come,
Jesus, remember me.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Lord! at thy table we behold
The wonders of thy grace;
But most of all admire that we
Should find a welcome place—

We, who were all defiled with sin,
And rebels to our God!

We, who have crucified thy Son,
And trampled on his blood!

What strange, surprising grace is this,
That we, so lost, have room!
Jesus our weary souls invites,
And freely bids us come.

Ye saints below, and hosts above,
Join all your sacred powers;
No theme is like redeeming love,
No Saviour is like ours.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shall be.
Perish, every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hop'd, or known;
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own.

Let the world despise and leave me,
They have left my Saviour too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me,
Thou art not, like them, untrue;
And whilst Thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends disown me—
Show Thy face, and all is bright.

Go, then, earthly fame and treasure,
Come, disaster, scorn, and pain;

In Thy service pain is pleasure,
With Thy favor loss is gain.
I have called Thee, Abba, Father,
I have set my heart on Thee;
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good to me.

Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to Thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
O, 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While Thy love is left to me;
O! 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with Thee.

Soul, then know thy full salvation,
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find in every station,
Something still to do or bear.
Think what spirit dwells within thee—
Think what Father's smiles are thine;
Think that Jesus died to win thee;
Child of heaven, can'st thou repine?

Haste thee on, from grace to glory,
Armed by faith, and winged by prayer,
Heaven's eternal days before thee,
God's own hand shall guide thee there.
Soon shall close thy earthly mission,
Soon shall pass thy pilgrim days,
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

"LORD, HELP ME."

Matt. xv. 25.

Blessed be Thy name,
Jesus Christ! the same
Yesterday, to-day, forever;
What from Thee my soul shall sever,
While I hear Thy voice,
And in Thee rejoice?

Guide me with Thine eye;
Warn to fight or fly,
When the foe, a lion raging,
Or, with serpent-guile assuaging,
Comes in wrath to tear,
Or by fraud ensnare.

Hold me with Thy hand,
For by faith I stand;
On Thy strength my sole reliance,
In Thy truth my whole affiance;
Then, where'er I roam,
I am travelling home.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRUE BELIEVER PREPARING TO UNITE WITH THE CHURCH AND COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

JUST as assuredly as any man desires and hopes for salvation, must he yield himself unreservedly and without compromise, to that God who provided salvation for him—to that Saviour who has redeemed him by His own precious blood—and to that ever-blessed Spirit who has so graciously undertaken to work in our hearts to will and to do according to the purpose of God. This is the word of the Gospel, that "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, thou shalt be saved." Thus thought and thus acted the primitive believers. They "first gave their ownselves to the Lord, and then to His church, according to the will of God."

This, many now living have felt to be their happy privilege to do; and this you, my dear reader, are now, I trust, about to do. Be

thankful, my friend, that God has heard your supplication, and that you have been encouraged to participate in such great and unspeakable privileges. Remember, however, that such encouragement is founded, not upon any fitness, preparedness, or worthiness in you, but upon the hope that you have become sensible of your own ignorance, guilt, and insufficiency, and have embraced Christ, and that you are looking to Him by prayer, and the diligent use of every means of grace, for wisdom and righteousness, and complete redemption; for His Holy Spirit to renew and sanctify you; and for grace and mercy according to your every need. This, and THIS ALONE, can give you a well-grounded hope that you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that you have fled from every self-righteous dependence, and "laid hold on Christ as THE ONLY hope set before you in the Gospel." See to it then, my dear friend, that such is your spirit, your determination, and your hope. Without this you are still without Christ, and consequently "without God and without hope in the world." Without this your profession will only be hypocrisy, and your communicating in Christ's presence only a

"crucifying of Christ afresh," by a shameful denial of the freeness, fullness, and all-sufficiency of His work and mercy, His Spirit and grace. Not to communicate is a dreadful sin, but so also is unworthy communion. As the one is an open rejection of God's authority, so is the other a daring insult to God's omniscient purity and holiness. The one refuses to obey the invitation to come to the feast, and the other comes without a wedding garment. The one lives without Christ and without God in the world, and the other in the church. The one is rebellion and the other is hypocrisy, and both sinful exceedingly.

See to it, then, that "Christ is formed within you the hope of glory," and that you are "in Christ," "not having on your own righteousness, which is as filthy rags" in the sight of God who looketh upon the motive and the heart, but that you are clothed in the true and only wedding garment, "the white robe" of the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven. "Prove, therefore, your ownself; know you not your ownself; how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobate." For if you are not in Christ—if you are not dead to any further

confidence in yourself, and to any hope of salvation, or of sanctification, safety, and persevering holiness, except through Christ,—your "goodness will be as the morning cloud, and the early dew, that soon passeth away;" and, "having put your hand to the Gospel plough," you will be found among those "who turn back unto perdition," and concerning whom Christ will say, at the day of judgment, "I never knew you." He alone can "stand fast," who has built his hope upon the rock Christ Jesus, since He is not only an immoveable rock to sustain, but also a spiritual rock to follow Him through all the wilderness, out of which will flow living waters, to quench and satisfy his thirsty soul. He alone is alive to God, so that he shall "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God," who, from the bottom of his heart, can say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Blessed is the man whose hope is thus fixed in Christ, "whose sins are covered." He shall not be moved by any slight of men, or artifice of the devil, but shall be "like a tree planted

by rivers of water, whose leaves are always green, and its fruit plentiful, and whose root fadeth never." The confession made by such a man, being rooted in the grace of Christ, will never issue in broken vows and cursed apostacy.

"Take heed then," my dear reader, "that there be not in you an evil heart of unbelief," which will assuredly lead you "to depart from the living God." How many professors, that once appeared "*hot*," (Rev. iii. 14–16,) have cooled down into *lukewarmness* and indifference, into worldliness and formality, and sometimes even into the icy form of ungodliness and infidelity, and having "begun in the Spirit," have "ended in the flesh." Their foundation being in themselves—their hope springing from excited feeling, and not from the word and promise, the person and the Spirit of Christ, and "having no root in them,—after a time they fall away, and "walk no more with Jesus." They *never really* knew Christ and the power of His Gospel, and therefore He never knew them. And hence "they have gone out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would still have continued with us."

There is, therefore, much to alarm the fears and awaken the conscience, in the discussion of the question, Ought I to join the church and go to the Lord's Supper? Many do both, and yet eat and drink unworthily. They bring judgment, that is, as the word means, condemnation upon themselves. They provoke God to withdraw his Spirit from them, to visit them with the frowns of his Providence, and to seal them to the day of perdition. They know that they were never convinced of sin, never converted, never born again, never transformed by the renewing of their mind, never truly devoted to God. While with their lips they confess Christ, their hearts are far from Him. They are none of His. They follow not after Him. They neither walk with Him, nor work for Him, nor live in or for Him, nor love Him. They neither feel the guilt of sin nor the greatness of salvation, the goodness of God nor the grace of Christ. They never felt the misery of being lost nor the rapture of being found, the helplessness of spiritual death nor the power of God in making them alive again. They were never led to cry out, "God, be merciful to me a sinner," and

never had reason, therefore, to "rejoice in God" as a sin pardoning God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. They do not live to Christ and they cannot die unto Him.

They have, therefore, gone back and walk no more with Christ and His people, or live in open hypocrisy and as enemies of the cross of Christ. For them to profess religion is impiety and to communicate is a lie. It is to take God's name in vain. It is to say by the lips and the mouth and the posture that they are the Lord's and that the Lord is theirs, while their heart is far from Him. It is Judas like to betray Christ with a kiss, and like Ananias and Sapphira to lie, "not unto men merely, but unto God."

This is sadly true, and I dare not, dear hearer, conceal it from you. There is such a thing as faith without works, which is dead—a name to live which is only the covering of a dead corpse—the form without the power of godliness—a religion which is no more than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. These are dead and unprofitable branches, withered, fruitless, having no root and no life from the living

vine, and what have such to do to come to the feast of the Lord? Can the dead praise Him? Can the dead call on His name, or feed upon Him, or grow up into the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus? No! Oh no! This feast is for the living, not the dead; for those who have been quickened by Christ; for those who having spiritual appetites and desires created within them, who as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby, who hunger and thirst after righteousness that they may be filled, and whose heart's desire and prayer is, that their souls may prosper and be in health.

All this is true—sadly true—and ought to lead you to examine yourself whether you be in the faith, and so eat of this bread and drink of the wine. Let not this, however, discourage you, if you realize and feel your own unworthiness; your want of any ability or strength to "hold fast your profession stedfast to the end, or to walk worthy of Him who hath called you" by His Spirit, and His grace, unto a life of holiness and new obedience. It is, indeed, a great thing to be a Christian. The Christian life is a high, holy, and heavenly calling. Its standard is perfec-

tion; its spirit purity; its aim holiness in the fear of God; its object the glory of God and the salvation of man; and its end everlasting life. It is as high above every other order, association, and rule of action, as the heavens are above the earth; as God is higher than man; and as the Bible is more perfect than any human code of morals. Any other calling a man may fulfil by his own ability; but to "walk by this rule," a man must be directed by "that wisdom which cometh from above, which is profitable to direct, and which thoroughly furnishes unto every good word and work," and he must be upheld and "kept also by the power of God, through faith unto salvation."

Great, however, as is the calling, the work, and the aim of the Christian, still greater is that grace and mercy which is vouchsafed by God to "work in him to will and to do;"—still greater is the merit, the intercession, and the ever-living presence and sympathizing spirit of our Divine Redeemer, who "prays for His disciples that their faith fail not;"—and still greater, too, the almighty power of God the Holy Spirit, who can preserve the graces He

has "wrought," subdue corruptions, help us to "crucify the world, the flesh, and the devil;" "to walk humbly with God;" and to "keep ourselves unspotted from the world," yes, able to wash, sanctify, and completely redeem us, and present us faultless before the Father with exceeding joy. Great then, O sinner, are thy sins, but greater that plenteous redemption which says to you, "though thy sins be as scarlet they shall become white as snow, though they be red as crimson, they shall become white as wool." Great, O sinner, are thy sins, which have abounded so as to rise like a mountain over your head, but the grace of Christ "has much more abounded," so that this mountain of iniquity shall be removed and cast into the sea of forgetfulness, and remembered no more forever. Great, O thou fearful heart, is thy weakness and unbelief, but God has "laid thy help on one who is mighty to save," who is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." "He is able, therefore, to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." "Look then unto Me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else.'

Great, O thou weak believer, is thy proneness to wander, and to forget Christ; but greater is the love of Christ, "who will never leave nor forsake you, who having once loved you, will love you unto the end, and who having begun a good work in you, will carry it on till the day of Jesus Christ." Great and numerous are thy foes, thy enemies, and thy temptations; but "greater is He that is for you, than all that can be against you;" "He is faithful to His promises, and cannot deny Himself;" "His gifts and calling are without repentance;" and as "He is the author, so is He the finisher of your faith." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we say, then, to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered

Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

While, therefore, it is true, that it would be better for those who trust in themselves, and go back, "not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment;" yet let not this discourage you or lead you to falter in your course. The same is true of baptism, of Christian education, of prayer, of the Bible,

of preaching, of alms, and of every other means of grace; since all these will aggravate a man's guilt, misery, and condemnation, if "he fail of the grace of God," and trusts *in them* for acceptance, and does not "obey the truth." "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, yea, the ploughing of the wicked is sin." (Prov. xxi. 4.) "The thoughts and intents of their hearts are evil, and only evil, and that continually." The only way, therefore, to avoid the curse and wrath of God against all the children of disobedience, is to enter upon the discharge of this and every other duty in the fear of the Lord, in dependence upon His Spirit, and looking to Him for grace and mercy to help you. And great as is the evil of coming to this duty in an improper, that is, a self-righteous or hypocritical spirit, vast are the advantages of a worthy reception, and blessed the consequences of a true and real communion with the Lord.

Here there is a living cup—
Wells of water, springing up
Unto life, that cannot die—
The pledge of immortality.
'Tis a fount of heavenly strength—
A sea of love, with length and breadth,
Proportioned to an undying soul,
Where all its powers in rapture roll.

And here behold the sacrifice
On which alone the soul can live,
Higher than heaven its countless price,
Its blessings more than earth can give.
Fast as Christ's mighty hand supplies,
The blessing multiplies,
'Mid earthly vanities the bread of truth,
And, 'mid decay and death, food of immortal youth.

Nature smoothed her mournful brow,
When she saw the gleaming bow
Which compass'd round heaven's cloudy space,
With its bright covenant of grace.
And still as down heaven's cloudy stair,
Comes that blest harbinger so fair,
The earth, with incense breathing dew,
Her veil of sorrow through,
Looks tearfully to heaven, and grateful smiles anew.

And as o'er flood-reviving earth,
That witness stands in heaven secure;
Thus o'er our new and better birth,
That sacramental sign is sure.
Until the sun shall make his bed,
And time be withered,
This pledge of saving mercy shall remain,
And none to Christ shall turn, and thither turn in vain.

"For as oft as we eat this bread and drink this wine, we do show the Lord's death till He come."

Therefore, in the strength of Christ, hold on thy way. Do not disobey Christ's authoritative

command, or turn a deaf ear to His melting invitation, but "do this in remembrance of Him," that being made worthy for it "by the imputation of His righteousness, which is without works on your part," you may be made partaker also of His holiness and of "the inheritance of the saints in light."

Come, then, to God in Christ, and as you accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace, say after me:

O God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to whom I have now yielded myself, according to Thy gracious warrant and mercy, I am sensible of the treachery and baseness of my own heart; but I am also acquainted with Thy power, and mercy, and faithfulness. Oh! let me not rashly take up a profession, which I shall as hastily abandon, or never fully maintain.

Help me to understand the engagements I have undertaken, that I may count the cost, and not prove a foolish builder. Help me to consider the difficulties and disadvantages that attend religion, and the troubles to which it may expose me. And may I seriously consider,

that I must "deny myself, and take up my cross, and follow Christ, if I would be His disciple."

Let none of these things, however, "move" me from my resolution. O give me such near and affecting views of "the glory that is to be revealed," and of that "wrath and fiery indignation" which await the ungodly—so set death and judgment before me—and so impress me with a sense of the worth of my soul, and the emptiness of this world, that I may be fully determined to accept of Christ, and adhere to him through evil and through good report, and "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Him." And O may this be my unalterable persuasion! Let me never turn aside, nor wander from Thee. Oh! let me not wander from Thy commandments! Let me never, like an ungracious prodigal, forsake my father's house, or count his "meat" contemptible. O never let me deny or forget that Jesus, whom I am so solemnly to acknowledge as "MY LORD AND MY GOD!" Let the unclean devil never re-enter, and take possession of this soul, which I consecrate as a "temple to the Holy Ghost." I am full of

fears, and have reason to be jealous of myself, but yet I am not void of hope; nor have I any reason to distrust my God. Thy grace is sufficient for me. O for "Thy name's sake, lead me and guide me; put Thy fear into my heart, that I may never depart from Thee."

But, oh my God, while I would obey and come to thy table, let me not come "unworthily." May I never "eat and drink judgment to myself." Deliver me from the dreadful guilt of "crucifying afresh, and putting to open shame" that Jesus whom I think my soul loves, and desires to remember, confess, and honor. Keep me from receiving poison from the richest food, and from coming for a blessing, and carrying away a curse. And to this end enable me, by thy grace, to commit my soul into Christ's hand, to depend on Him for all I need; and let His gracious Spirit help my infirmities, plead for me with groanings that cannot be uttered, bear witness with my spirit that I am a child of God, and strengthen me with all might in the inner man; that I may thus hold fast the beginning of my confidence firm unto the end. Which I humbly ask for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Janet Fraser.

You may find encouragement, my dear reader, in coming to the Lord's table, notwithstanding many fears and misgivings, from the story of Janet Fraser's gift of a site for a Free Church, at Thornhill, Scotland. She was a very aged and poor woman, (earning about eighteen dollars in the course of a year,) who lived in that portion of the country in which the Lord of the soil was bitterly opposed to the Free Church, and had positively refused to sell or rent as much ground as would afford room for even one church. The adherents of the Free Church had, therefore, as in many other cases, to worship in the open air, on the sea shore, or wherever they could, amid all the inclemencies of the weather, and during the depth of winter. Janet, whose name will now go down to posterity as one of the founders of the Free Church, was in possession of a small piece of ground, an angle of which was within the prohibited soil. It was, however, her all. She greatly required it for herself and her own homestead, and she possessed all the prudence, forethought, and caution for which the Scotch are so justly commended. This property, which she had inherited from two maiden aunts,

consisted of two small houses and a plot of ground.

When a committee of the Free Church at Thornhill waited on Janet, to see if she would *sell* them her ground, she utterly refused to do so, because she said she had vowed to give it to God, and therefore it was only as a gift that she could part with it. In the meantime, an agent of the Duke of Buccleuch offered to purchase the ground. But Janet cut short all his overtures, by the noble reply, "She had devoted it to her Maker, and she wouldn't take five hundred pounds sterling, (or about $2,500,) no, nor all the Dukedom of Queensberry, for her ground, under a prohibition to give it to the Almighty." She gave it, therefore, to the Free Church, and upon it now stands the commodious Church of Thornhill.

This resolution or vow of Janet, (who, by the way, is a poet and an authoress, and keeps a very full journal,) had its origin in a purpose which she formed at a sacramental occasion and as she regards it as an occurrence of "too serious a nature to have one flaw in it," we shall quote from her own MS. account. "I essayed," she says, "on the Friday before, to devote

Janet Fraser's Cottage, and Thornhill Free Church.

myself to my Redeemer, soul, body, and spirit, with all I could claim as mine, to be at His service. I sat down at the Lord's table on Sabbath, when an old woman followed; and when the bread came, she took her piece and laid the rest on a plate, which was handed down the tables. But in the discourse, before distributing the elements, the minister repeated these words, quoted from Isaiah xliii. 1: 'Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.' I thought they entered my soul, and lifted it up in joy which I could hardly contain; and when the bread passed, such fear came on me, as that I durst not lift it off the plate. I wished the cup might pass likewise, if I did not belong to God. I tasted the cup, but the minister observed I had missed the bread. He spoke to the elder who was carrying it back, that a person or persons had missed the bread. The elder offered it to a man who sat beside me, who said we had all eaten of it, when I replied, it was I who missed it; so he gave me a piece. I admired the providence, as much as the promise, and I have now need

of them both. Lo, in all these things God oftentimes worketh with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living. God is good to Israel."

Such is her own simple account of her feelings. Like many—indeed we might say like all the children of God at times—she had been in a state of coldness, and dark misgiving. She "was in a strait betwixt two things." She knew it was her duty to go to the communion, and that she ought to be in a suitable and proper frame of mind and heart, and yet such was not, as she feared, her condition, and therefore she was in dread of committing sin by coming to the table of the Lord. But still, as her state of coldness was a burden and a grief to her, and she anxiously desired to be delivered from it, she ventured, like the poor woman in the gospel, to press forward through the crowd, so as to get as near her Saviour as she could, knowing that "if He would, He could make her whole," even though she could but touch, as it were, the hem of His garment, or have one ray of His life-giving countenance lifted upon her. This was faith walking in darkness and struggling in weakness. And it was rewarded. He

who made whole the poor woman, "helped her infirmities and unbelief." The desires of her heart were fulfilled. She saw the goodness of the Lord. She was lifted up out of her despondency. The shadows of night were scattered, and joy came in the morning of her fresh-dawning hopes. Her heart was filled also with love. Gratitude demanded an expression. She had received much, and she felt that she ought to give much. And, therefore, like the poor widow at the temple, who was commended by our Saviour because she "gave more than all the rest, inasmuch as she gave her all," Janet gave her all—her home, her patrimony, her "living." She gave what wealth could not buy, nor influence secure, nor aristocratic pride any longer withhold. She gave unto the Lord a place where a sanctuary might be built, from which the praises of the Lord might ever ascend out of the hearts of His free and faithful followers. That house has been built—(singularly irregular, indeed—so as to fill every portion of the lot, and thus accommodate as many worshippers as possible,) but a perpetual memorial of the faithfulness and mercy of the Lord to them that seek Him, however dark and desponding

may be their feelings, when they seek Him in the way of His promises and His ordinances, and with their whole heart.

Oh, yes! thus, and far better is God ever with His people than tongue can describe;—better than their fears, and more merciful than all their hopes. Thus does the high and holy Saviour, who inhabiteth eternity, and the praises thereof, look down upon those that are of an humble and a contrite heart, "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," said the blessed Jesus, when on earth, "because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bound. Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased: I will put My Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto vic-

tory. And in His name shall the Gentiles trust."

Come to the table, then, my dear reader, relying upon Christ, and your hopes shall not be disappointed. Feed upon Him by faith, and then shall you experience the truth of that saying, "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me and I in him." Come, believing in this unseen Saviour, heartily approving of the method which God has appointed for man's salvation, and then, "being justified by faith, you shall have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." From your inmost soul, submit yourself to the plan of righteousness devised by God, and "rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Earnestly desire to "be found in Christ," having no other righteousness or ground of trust but "that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Let it be the very foundation and corner-stone of your hope and confidence, that "Christ died for our sins," and was "made sin," that is, a

sin-offering "for us, that He might be made unto us of God righteousness, and that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Under the full consciousness of your own guilt and sinful infirmities, "behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," who "made His soul an offering for sin," and "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself;" that "what the law could not do," God might do, by sending "His Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemning sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us." Christ, therefore, has "made peace by the blood of His cross," and "given Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity," so that we may "have no condemnation," but be "freely justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law," and be "purified unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Let your prayer, therefore, be, Lord, I believe all these glad tidings, help thou mine unbelief. Lord, increase my faith, and perfect that which is lacking in it, that feeling its *strength*, I may not doubt its *reality*.

Let your desire be toward this blessed Sa-

viour, and your delight be in Him, and "love not in word, but in deed, and in truth." Come to Him, saying, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none in all the earth that I desire beside Thee. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord." Behold in your loving and all-merciful Redeemer, "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." Tell Him that you love Him. Say to Him, "Lo, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love Thee, and have chosen Thy testimonies as my heritage forever." Tell Him that you "are constrained by His love to live not unto yourself, but unto Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you;"—that you find "His yoke easy and His burden light;"—that His commandments are not "grievous," and that it will be your delight to "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes." As He says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you," tell Him it will be your aim and purpose to "keep all His commandments and His statutes blameless." As He requires you to "love your neighbor as yourself and forgive enemies," ask Him to fill your heart with love and charity

towards all men. And as we "hereby know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," see that ye "love one another with a pure heart fervently."

"But, O my God," you may still say, "how weak and how imperfect is my love! I even hate myself, that I can love Thee no more. I abhor myself, that I love thy Christ no better; and blush to think that I am no more kindly affectioned to those whom Thou hast loved with an everlasting love, and with whom I hope to live and converse forever.

"My only comfort is, that I *would* love Thee; I desire to love Thee; I long to love Thee, even as Thou wouldst be loved. Lord, kindle my spark into a flame, and let that flame be strong and steady, and especially grant that my obedience may prove my love to be of the right kind; for how can I say I love Thee, if my heart be not right with Thee? And for Thy sake, may I love my neighbor; especially the happy members of that glorious family to which it is my highest honor to belong: O may I love them as myself, and in honor prefer them before myself, and think no office of love too mean for me to stoop to, in imitation of Him who

came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. (Matt. xx. 28.) And Thou, O blessed Saviour, who hast died that I might be 'cleansed from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit, and that Thou mightest perfect in me holiness in the fear of the Lord,' grant that I may be made 'perfect in every good work to do Thy will,' and that I may be sanctified wholly, and my whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless, to the coming of our Lord." (1 Thess. v. 23.)

Come, then, to the table of the Lord, in this spirit, and with these desires, and "you shall be filled, and your soul shall be satisfied." Here you may expect to have your faith strengthened by the sensible representation which is made of Christ, as both crucified and exalted. Here you may hope to have your love inflamed by the remembrance of that love (high as heaven, deep as hell, stronger than death, and endless as a past and coming eternity,) with which Christ hath loved you. Here your resolutions will be confirmed by the experience of His loving kindness and tender mercy. Here your mind will be spiritualized, by being set on things above, and seeing Him who is invisible.

Here your whole spirit and conversation may be moulded by the grace and strength imparted unto you. Here your peace may flow as a river, and your joy be unspeakable and full of glory. Here you may be clothed in the whole armour of God, so that you may fight manfully the good fight of faith, be prepared for all the troubles of life, and made triumphant amid the agonies of death.

You will feel as did Agnes Beaumont, the friend of Bunyan, who united with his church in 1672.*

"There was a church-meeting at Gamlingay," she says, "and about a week before it, I was much in prayer, especially for two things—the one, that the Lord would incline the heart of my father to let me go, which he sometimes refused; and, in those days, it was like death to be kept from such a meeting. I have found by experience, that to pray hard was the most successful method of obtaining my father's consent; for when I have not thus prayed, I have found it very difficult to prevail. The other request was, that the Lord would go with me,

* Read the beautiful and edifying Illustrated Life of Bunyan, recently issued by the A. S. S. U. p. 303, &c.

and that I might enjoy his presence there at his table; that, as in many times past, it might be a sealing ordinance to my soul; and that I might have such a sight of a bleeding and dying Saviour, as might melt my heart and enlarge it in love to His name.

"The Lord was pleased to grant my requests. Upon asking my father the day before, he seemed unwilling at first, but pleading with him, and telling him that I would do all my work in the morning before I went out, and return home at night, I gained his consent. Friday being come, I prepared every thing ready to set out. My father inquired who carried me. I told him I thought Mr. Wilson, of Hitchen, as he told my brother, the Tuesday before, he should call; to which he said nothing. I went to my brother's and waited, expecting to meet Mr. Wilson; but he not coming, it cut me to the heart, and, fearing I should not go, I burst into tears; for my brother had told me that his horses were all at work, and that he could not spare one more than what he and my sister were to ride on, and it being the depth of winter, I could not walk thither.

"Now I was afraid that all my prayers on

this account were lost; my way seemed to be hedged up with thorns. I waited with many a longing look and a sorrowful heart, under my sad disappointment. Oh, thought I, that the Lord would but put it into the heart of some person to come this way! Thus I still waited, but with my heart full of fears. At last, quite unexpected, came Mr. Bunyan. The sight of him caused a mixture both of joy and of grief. I was glad to see him, but afraid he would not be willing to take me up behind him, and how to ask him, I knew not. At length, I desired my brother to do it, which he did. But Mr. Bunyan answered, with some degree of roughness, 'No; I will not carry her.' These words were cutting, indeed, and made me weep bitterly.

"My brother, perceiving my troubles, said, 'Sir, if you do not carry her, you will break her heart:' but he made the same reply, adding, 'Your father would be grievous angry, if I should.' (A certain person in the neighborhood, one Mr. Farry, who is often referred to afterwards in this relation, had slandered Mr. Bunyan, and set her father against him, endeavoring to make his vile calumnies pass for

truth.) 'I will venture that,' said I. And thus, with much entreaty, he was prevailed on; and oh, how glad was I to think I was going!

"I had not rode far, before my heart began to be lifted up with pride, at the thoughts of riding behind this servant of the Lord, and was pleased if any one looked after us, as we rode along. Indeed, I thought myself very happy that day: first, that it pleased God to make way for my going; and then, that I should have the honor to ride behind Mr. Bunyan, who would sometimes be speaking to me about the things of God.

"The meeting began not long after we got thither; and the Lord made it a sweet season to my soul indeed. Oh, it was a feast of fat things! I sat under his shadow with great delight. When at the Lord's table, I found such a return of prayer that I was scarcely able to bear up under it. I was, as it were, carried up to heaven, and had such a sight of the Saviour as even broke my heart in pieces. Oh! how I then longed to be with Christ! How willingly would I have died in the place, and gone immediately to glory! A sense of my sins and of His dying love, made me love

Him, and long to be with Him. I have often thought of his goodness in his remarkable visit to my soul that day; but He knew the temptations that I was to meet with the very same night and a few days after. I have seen the bowels of His compassion towards me in these manifestations of His love, before I was tried. This was infinite condescension indeed!"

Thus may it be, and thus I trust it will be with you, my dear reader; so that, being filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory, your heart, like Bunyan's being satisfied with comfort and hope, now you can say with him, I can now believe that my sins will be forgiven me; yea, so taken with the love and mercy of God, as not to know how to contain yourself.

"I thought," says Bunyan, "I could have spoken of His love, and told of His mercy to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me, had they been capable of understanding me. Wherefore, I said to my soul, with much gladness, 'Well, would I had a pen and ink here, I would write this down before I go any farther.'"

Soft as falls the heavenly dew,
Weary nature to renew,
Or the flakes, unearthly pure,
Of the snowy coverture;
Thus too high for mortal sense,
Christ His presence doth dispense,
Seen in diviner sympathies,
In sacred joys that rise,
And waft the soul to heaven with rapture's sighs.

Jesus hath left His flock below,
And gone into the Mount to pray
For His poor wanderers, left to go
Without Him, on the stormy way.
But when the tempest rageth high,
With dread their fearful hearts to try,
Their tearful eyes shall see Him nigh,
Stilling the tempest into peace,
Bidding all dark forebodings cease;
Shedding abroad His heavenly love,
Inspiring hopes of joys above,
Where soon upon the blissful shore,
They from their Lord shall go on stormy waves no more.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with

loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles'. The Lord is merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep his anger forever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children. Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts; ye ministers of His that do His pleasure. Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of His dominion; bless the Lord, O my soul."

"What shall I render unto the Lord, for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the

Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people."

ON THE COMMUNION AT CANONBIE,

Dispensed in July, 1844, by the Rev. Dr. GORDON, in a retired spot, where the congregation, who had hitherto been forced to worship on the high road, were on that occasion permitted by the Duke of Buccleuch to meet.

"Do this," 'twas thus the Saviour spake, "in memory of Me,
Remembering Him who died for you upon th' accursed tree;
And ever when this bread ye break, and when this cup ye drink,
Think of My blood poured forth, and of My broken body think."

O words of peace and comfort! on the wounded soul how oft,
Like balm have they descended, so soothingly and soft,
When the Lord hath called his wearied ones aside to some green spot,
Where all the toils of Life's highway might be awhile forgot!

And thus by His afflicted flock, His voice even now is heard,
And by the thoughts of His great love, these thousand breasts are stirred;
For He into the wilderness hath lured them by His voice,
That there He may speak peace to them, and bid their hearts rejoice.

And, surely such a scene as this remembrance well may
wake
Of Him, the meek and lowly One, who suffered for their
sake—
Of Him who was rejected and despised by mortal pride—
Of Him who taught the multitudes upon the mountain
side—

And said: "Rejoice, when men revile and brand your
names with scorn;
Rejoice in persecutions that for My name's sake are borne:
Thus did they ever persecute the saints in days gone by,
But be exceeding glad, for great is your reward on high."

Bound by a holy charm,
We pass'd through raging sea,
And 'neath a mighty arm
Burst chains of slavery.

Let us His praise unfold,
Who our avenger came;
And, robed in pureness, hold
The festal of the Lamb.

He for our souls did bleed;
Oh, then, in holy love,
Upon Him let us feed,
And live to God above.

Christ is our sacrifice,
The Lamb come down from high,
Death's angel dread descries
His blood, and passes by.

Oh, Victim, worthy heaven,
Of death the victory;
Who chains of hell hath riven,
And borne her gates away:

From jaws of death's dark tomb,
He bursts into the light,
And opes beyond the gloom,
The heavenly infinite.

Grant us with Thee to die,
That we, with Thee may rise,
And build our home on high,
With Thee, beyond the skies.

Praise Father, praise the Son,
Who leadst to starry homes;
Praise Spirit, three in One,
From whom all mercy comes.

Communion of my Saviour's blood,
In Him to have my lot and part,
To prove the virtue of that blood,
Which burst on Calvary from His heart.

To feed by faith on CHRIST, my bread,
His body broken on the tree;
To live in Him, my living Head,
Who died, and rose again, for me:—

This be my joy and comfort here,
This pledge of future glory mine;
Jesus, in spirit now appear,
And break the bread, and pour the wine.

From Thy dear hand may I receive
The tokens of Thy dying love;
And while I feast on earth, believe
That I shall feast with Thee above.

Ah! here, though in the lowest place,
Thee at Thy table may I meet,
And see Thee, know Thee, face to face,
For such a moment death were sweet.

What, then, will their fruition be,
Who meet in heaven with blest accord?
A moment?—no, eternity!
They are forever with the Lord.

In the hour of trial,
Jesus, pray for me;
Lest, by base denial,
I depart from Thee.
When Thou seest me waver,
With a look recall,
Nor, for fear or favor,
Suffer me to fall.

With its witching pleasures,
Would this vain world charm,
Or, its sordid treasures,
Spread, to work me harm;
Bring to my remembrance
Sad Gethsemane,
Or, in the darker semblance,
Cross-crowned Calvary.

If, with sore affliction,
Thou in love chastise,
Pour Thy benediction
On the sacrifice;
Then, upon Thine altar,
Freely offer'd up,
Though the flesh may falter,
Faith shall drink the cup.

When, in dust and ashes,
To the grave I sink,
While heaven's glory flashes
O'er the shelving brink,
On Thy truth relying,
Through that mortal strife,
Lord, receive me, dying,
To eternal life.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRUE BELIEVER REMEMBERING CHRIST AT THE COMMUNION TABLE.

WHAT, my friend, are the ministers of Christ, at whose hand you are now about to receive the emblems of our Saviour's love and passion? "Let a man," says the apostle, "so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Were not this exalted office so distinctly and unequivocally delineated and enjoined, it would be the very height of unpardonable and blasphemous presumption in any man to assume such a position between the high and holy Sovereign of the universe, and His accountable and guilty creatures. But such being the duties which ministers are called upon to discharge, in dependence upon the gracious guidance and help

of our adorable Redeemer, it would be presumption in them to shrink from it, or, under a plea of affected modesty, to make themselves prominent, and allow personal considerations to hinder them from boldly and faithfully holding forth the word of life. Especially is this true on such an occasion as that of the communion, when the King himself comes near, that He may hold intercourse with those who have chosen Him as their Redeemer. Here, especially, let the minister remember that he is in Christ's stead, as though God did beseech his hearers by them. In this spirit let him persuade and entreat them to be "reconciled to God." And in this spirit, also, do you, dear reader, come to the table of the Lord. He is himself present to bless you, and to do you good. Let, then, all thoughts of His ministers be banished from your mind, and let Christ himself speak to you on that occasion, when He will afford you the opportunity of celebrating this feast of love. It was on the same night in which He was betrayed, that Christ took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto His disciples, saying, "This do in remembrance of me." "Likewise, also,"

did He bless and give to them the cup. And what He did with the twelve apostles, He does also with all His disciples to the end of the world. "For," says the apostle Paul, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and, when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner, also, He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

Such is the Lord's Supper. It is the LORD'S. Christ is the beginning, middle, and end of it. Christ is its author and finisher. His finished work is its foundation, and the object of its commemoration, the antitype of which it is a type, the thing signified by its sign, the blessing secured by its seals, and appropriated by their reception—the hope set before us. Christ and Him crucified is, therefore, the sum and substance, the alpha and omega, the first and

the last, of this most solemn and endearing of all the ordinances.

Christ Himself is present. He is the bread of heaven, the living water, the new and heavenly wine. His presence, spirit and power impart life and reality to the scene, and divine, quickening virtue to the feast itself. Virtue goes out of Christ, and gives infinite value and unspeakable sweetness to the elements, in themselves carnal.

Born for us, and for us given,
Of a virgin undefiled,
Scattering wide the seeds of heaven,
Sojourned He on this world's wild;
And on that remembered even,
His appointed course fulfilled.

Meekly to the law complying,
He had finished its commands,
And to them, at supper lying,
Gave Himself, with His own hand,
This memorial of His dying,
To every age, to every land.

'Tis His grace to our receiving,
Makes the bread His flesh to be;
And the wine, our sins relieving
Blood, from every sin to free;
Though not seeing, yet believing,
Christ reveals the mystery.

To the smitten rock then fleeing,
Drink we the New Covenant,
Which, to ancient types agreeing,
To the latest times is sent.
Still believing, though not seeing,
Christ in His own Sacrament.

In faith, then, coming to the feast,
There present to the *heart*,
Not to the *hands*, the Eternal Priest
Will His true self impart.

"This do," says Christ, "in remembrance of Me." This do, because, in the first place, this is an ordinance which I appointed for My own glory, for your comfort, and as a means of establishing, preserving, and perpetuating My church. "For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death"—make a proclamation of, and attest your faith in, the great fact and doctrine of My vicarious death, for the atonement of sin and the redemption of sinners—till I come again at the great day of My appearing, "to judge the quick and the dead." "He that believeth" in Me, as an atoning Mediator, and as an almighty and all-sufficient Redeemer, will then be saved "from the wrath that is to come;" while "he that believeth not" shall then be as assuredly

damned. "For the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day."

Dear reader, "Do you then believe in Me?" This is the language which Christ in this ordinance addresses to you. "Do you," He says, "believe that I am the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, besides whom there is none else, who am able to save to the uttermost all that come unto Me by faith? If you do, then 'do this in remembrance of Me.' Do you now receive Me as your Saviour in particular, and not merely as 'the Saviour of all men,' and do you believe on me in *your* heart?—then come near unto Me at this time, and 'do this in remembrance of Me.' Do you put your trust—your hope for acceptance with God, and for every spiritual blessing, on that 'work which the Father gave Me to do,' and which

I finished when I 'gave up the ghost,' as 'a curse and a sin-offering' upon the cross, and do you do this, believing that 'God is in Christ reconciling sinners unto Himself, and not imputing unto them the guilt of their trespasses, but the merit of Christ's righteousness, so that being justified by faith, they may have peace with God?'—then 'do this in remembrance of Me.' Do you fear, and tremble, and stand in doubt, when you look to your own heart, your own feelings, and your own inability? and do you feel that all 'your wisdom is foolishness,' all 'your strength weakness,' and 'all your goodness but as the morning cloud and the early dew, that soon vanishes away?' —then come here, and 'do this in remembrance of Me.' Do you realise that this duty takes precedence of every other obligation, and that privilege transcends immeasurably every other? —then come, and with a full, a thankful, and grateful heart, 'do this in remembrance of Me.' Do you feel that whereas you were once too proud to have Me to reign over you, too much ashamed to be thought religious, too worldly to care for spiritual things, and too carnally-minded to be willing to give up the

pleasures and vanities and gaieties of the world, you are now able to rejoice in being My disciple, and to find pleasure and delight in keeping My ordinances and commandments blameless—then "do this in remembrance of Me." For you, and such as you, I have appointed this feast, and to you it is that I would ever give a welcoming invitation.

Oh, bless'd, bless'd is every one
Who to the marriage-feast
And holy supper of the Lamb,
Is made a welcome guest.

II. But, secondly, let Me, says Christ, ask you to do this in remembrance, that is, in commemoration of what I am, and in attestation of your belief in My divinity. "Whom do men say that I am?" "Why, my Lord," you may reply, "men are very much divided in their sentiments respecting THEE. Some denounce THEE as an impostor, some regard THEE but as one of the prophets, while others again consider that THOU art exalted among the angels and other high intelligences." "But whom," asks Christ again, "do you say that I am?" And what can you answer and say, but what Peter said—"THOU art the Christ, THE SON OF THE

LIVING GOD." Yes, Lord, we know Thee who Thou art, THE SON OF GOD. And to you, Jesus answers you, even as He did to Simon, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father who is in heaven; for no man can come unto Me except My Father draw him, and no man can call Me LORD, and trust in Me as such, except by the Holy Ghost."

When God revealed Himself to Moses, He said, "I AM THAT I AM;" "and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." This God did, to teach the eternity and immutability of His divine essence, and that all existing beings were created and sustained by Him, and derived their life from HIS. Remember, therefore, what I also said unto you while I was yet with you in the flesh, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM; and ye shall see the SON OF MAN sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven;" and how again I revealed myself to John in my last communication to the world, saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was,

and which is to come, the Almighty." Even, therefore, as I then declared, so would I have you now remember, that, "as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given unto THE SON to have life in Himself;" "that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." "You believe in God," that He is self-existent, immutable, eternal, omniscient, and omnipotent; "believe also in Me, that I and the Father are one;" one in substance and equal in power; and, therefore, that I am equally entitled to the glory and the homage of every creature; for, "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and THE WORD WAS GOD." "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no foundations abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth. While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there; when He set a compass upon the face of the deep; when He established the clouds above; when

He strengthened the foundations of the deep; when He gave to the sea His decree, that the water should not pass His commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth. Then I was with Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him."

Then it was that "I was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God." Then it was, that in the counsels of eternity—"the counsel of peace that was between them both,"—"God saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor, therefore, His arm brought salvation unto Him." Then it was that God said, "I will declare the decree. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen (that is, the Gentiles,) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Remember, then, all this, that when you come to this table, you may come to one who, while He "was formed in fashion as a man," was, at the same time, "in the form of God;"—who is, "Immanuel, God with us," "God manifest in the flesh;"—and who is, therefore, "the mighty God," "mighty to save," yea, "able to save,

to the very uttermost, all that come unto Him by faith." "Do this, therefore," says Christ, "in remembrance of what I am" "THE GREAT GOD, AND YOUR SAVIOUR."

THE WORD, who ever sits at God's right hand,
From the bright palace of eternity,
Went forth unto His work
At solemn even-tide.
As time drew near that His own chosen friend
Should yield Him to His envious enemies,
He gave Himself, e'en like
An offered sacrifice,
Gave Himself to his own, with His own hands—
A two-fold offering of both flesh and blood,
That so the double gift
Might the whole man sustain.

When born, He was himself their guide and friend,
When eating with them, was Himself their food;
In dying paid their price,
Reigning is their reward.
O Lord, who didst a willing victim die,
Open for us the long-closed doors of heaven,
Griefs on all sides oppress,
Strengthen and grant us aid.
Thou who Thy sheep dost feed with Thine own flesh,
Good Shepherd, unto Thee, with Father blest,
And Spirit evermore,
All glory be to Thee.*

* An ancient Hymn.

III. But, in the third place, "Do this," says Christ, "in remembrance" of what I became, in order to purchase eternal redemption for you. It was when there was no other eye that could pity, and no other arm that could bring salvation, and when the violated and injured throne of God demanded vindication before His universal empire, that Christ said, as it is written in the volume of God's everlasting decrees, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." Then it was that in order that God might "reconcile us unto Himself, and give to us the ministry of reconciliation," and that "peace and good-will might be proclaimed on earth," that Christ "being in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He who was "God over all, and blessed for ever," "was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. He was oppressed, and he

was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth; he was taken from prison and from judgment, and he was cut off out of the land of the living, and made his grave with the wicked." Yea, though "he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; He put him to grief; and he was numbered with the transgressors."

Now, "do this," says Christ, "in remembrance of" all this. Remember all I did and suffered in the flesh, from the first to the last hour of that period of mysterious humiliation and abasement; how in infancy I was found a child of poverty; how, even in childhood, I became a wanderer and an exile; how the children in the market-place publicly hooted at and mocked me, as "a glutton and wine-bibber;" how I "came even to my own, and my own received me not;" how I went about in deserts and cities, having no certain dwelling-place, nor even where to lay my head; how I endured such continual "contradiction of sinners against myself;" and how, after

"going about doing good," and "fulfilling all righteousness," I was, "by wicked hands," by perjured and suborned witnesses, by an intimidated and unjust judge, and by the bitter malice of ungodly foes, "crucified and slain." So unparalleled were my sufferings, that "I was a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that saw me laughed me to scorn; they shot out the lip, they shook the head. I was poured out like water; and all my bones were out of joint; my heart was like wax; it was melted in the midst of my bowels, and I was brought into the dust of death. The assembly of the wicked men enclosed me. They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." "Is it nothing to all you that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which was done unto me, wherewith the Lord afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger."

And wherefore?—Christ, in this ordinance does as it were say to you,—was I thus afflicted? Surely I have borne *your* griefs, and carried *your* sorrows. I was wounded for *your* transgressions, and bruised for *your* iniquities. The chastisement of *your* peace was upon Me, and

with My stripes *you* are healed. The Lord laid on ME the iniquity of you all. For the transgression of My people was I stricken, for I bore their iniquities. For God made ME, who knew no sin, to be sin for you, that ye might be made the righteousness of God in ME.

"Do this," then, "in remembrance of" these things. See in the bread and wine, in the bread broken and the wine poured out, and in the administration of each to every communicant, the evidence, the certainty, and the awfulness of your guilt, ruin and coming misery; the dreadfulness of perdition; and the infinite difficulties which lay in the way of your *possible* salvation. Remember this, that you may be more deeply convinced of sin, and humbled in the dust of penitence and self-abasement; that you may properly understand, and duly estimate, the nature and extent of My humiliation, sufferings, and death, and your consequent duty and privilege; and that, comprehending more of the mystery of godliness, and the unspeakable love of God, you may put away all fear, all shame, and all lukewarmness, and "glory only in the cross,

whereby you are crucified unto the world, and the world is crucified unto you."

He, who on earth as man was known,
And bore our sins and pains,
Now, seated on th' eternal throne,
The God of glory reigns!

His hands the wheels of nature guide,
With an unerring skill;
And countless worlds, extended wide,
Obey His sovereign will.

While harps unnumber'd sound His praise,
In yonder world above,
His saints on earth admire His ways,
And glory in His love.

His righteousness, to faith reveal'd,
Wrought out for guilty worms,
Affords a hiding place, and shield,
From enemies and storms.

When troubles, like a burning sun,
Beat heavy on their head,
To this high rock His people run,
And find a pleasing shade.

How glorious He!—how happy they—
In such a glorious friend!
Whose love secures them all the way,
And crowns them at the end.

IV. But, in the fourth place, "Do this, Christ says, in remembrance of Me,"—that is, in order

that you may be led to the lively faith of what I now am. "The cup has now passed from Me." The work of humiliation "is now finished." The last enemy is subdued, and will be finally destroyed. Many were the foes that opposed My victory and your redemption; but I have "led captivity captive," triumphed over them in My cross, accomplished "a complete redemption," and "brought in an everlasting righteousness." God's law demanded satisfaction, and I "magnified it." God's attributes required atonement, and I drank the cup even to the very dregs. The wrath of God was revealed from heaven against all transgressors; and against me it was that God said, "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of hosts;" yea, even when Thou, O God, had forsaken Me, even then did I not forsake you, helpless, guilty, and undone sinner. The world, the flesh, and the devil were all against you; "but this is the victory that overcometh" them all, "even faith" in Me; for "your life is hid with Christ in God." Guilt alarms you with the apprehension of coming wrath; but "who will lay any thing to your charge? seeing it is God

that justifieth." Satan whispers, that after all you shall be condemned; but "who is he that condemneth? seeing it is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession." Fear, and doubt, and unbelief, lead you to tremble, lest you fall away from your steadfastness; but "if God be for you, who can be against you?" And "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give you all things?"

"I still live; and because I live, ye shall live also." "It was needful for you that I should go away," and be no longer with you; but "I have not left you comfortless. I have given you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, who glorifies Me;" and "Lo, I also am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth; and I am Head over all things to the church." I am now "a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins;" and I "ever live to make intercession for the ungodly." "I have not left you as orphans in the world," nor handed you over to

any earthly church or ministry. "I am still THE VINE, and ye are the branches;" "I am the living Head, and ye are the members." I am "that Head from whom the whole body fitly joined together maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." I "ascended up far above all heavens," that I might fill all things with My presence, uphold all things by My power, and make all things work together for the good of My church and people.

Remember, therefore, who, and what, and where, I now am, and "let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor

angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Do THIS," then, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ,—

Jesus! who once a child of woe,
Wept, bled, and suffered here below,
And deigned for men to die!
Jesus! to praise whose matchless name
Ten thousand glorious seraphs frame
The chorus of the skies.

Jesus! who made this ponderous earth,
Who gave yon splendid planets birth,
And formed each lesser star.
Jesus! who fills creation's throne,
Yet stoops to mediate for His own,
At Heaven's eternal bar.

Jesus! of whom the prophets tell,
Who death disarms, and conquers hell,
And bids the tempter flee.
Jesus! who hears the contrite sigh,
Who wipes the tear from sorrow's eye,
And sets the prisoners free.

This is the theme which angels love,
When through the radiant courts above
Their loudest anthem rings;

When every heart, and every tongue,
And every golden harp is strung,
To praise the King of kings.

V. But, once more, "Do this," says Christ, "in remembrance of" My presence with you on every communion occasion. I said to My disciples, while yet with them, "I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God,"—that is, until the kingdom of God shall come. But that kingdom is now come. As often, therefore, as you eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, "is it not the communion of My body and of My blood?" seeing that "I am with you to bless you, and to do you good." This, then, is My supper. This is My banqueting-chamber, and "My banner over you is love." When I promised to meet My disciples, and to bless them, I fulfilled all their expectations, and "their sorrow was turned into joy." Believe Me, therefore, when I say that "*you* will see Me also, and *your* heart shall rejoice, and *your* joy no man shall take from you, for I will show you plainly of the Father." Remember what the disciples *were*, and what, through My "grace strengthening them," they *became*. How many are

there now in heaven, if thou canst tell?—even "a multitude which no man can number." And "whence came they?" Did they not come "through much tribulation," and many temptations, doubts, and fears? And were they not "made more than conquerors" over sin, fear, doubt, death and hell, "through the blood of the Lamb?" Now, what they *were*, you, it is true, now *are*—poor, miserable, blind, naked, and driven from wave to wave of trouble, fear, and doubt. And what they now *are*, it is equally true, you *may* be; and if you will only believe, hope, trust, and obey Me, you *will* be. Have you ever backslidden?—Remember Peter, that like him, you may now turn and look upon Me whom you have pierced, and weep and be forgiven. Have you been unbelieving?—Remember Thomas, that like him, seeing Christ "evidently crucified before you and slain," you may cry out, "My Lord and my God." Have you been cold and lukewarm?—Let "My love constrain you," so that "though now you see Me not, yet believing, you may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Have you been afraid to hope and rejoice?—"O thou of little faith; wherefore dost thou doubt?" What

have you to do but believe, seeing "that all the promises are yea and amen in Me," and that "I am yours." Can you then doubt my ability, or deny my willingness? "Sooner may the heavens and the earth pass away, than one jot or tittle of all that I have promised remain unfulfilled." Doubt then no more. Be fearful and unbelieving no longer. "Remember Me." Think not of your sins, except to remember that "My blood cleanseth from all sin." Think not of your weakness, except to "glory in your infirmities," since "when you are weak then are you strong." Think not of your hard and stony heart, except to mourn over it, and to bring it unto me, that I may soften and make it a heart of flesh. You have looked forward to the communion occasion, and to your participation in its solemn services, as something awful, but "remember ME." "Fear not, IT IS I." "Come unto me, you that thus labor, and I will give you rest. Come near that I may embrace you in my arms of mercy; that I may fill you with joy; shed abroad my love in you; and that I may enable you to feel that it is none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven." "Eat,

O friend; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." "Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you."

"Do this, then, in remembrance of ME;" and "if you love me, keep my commandments;" "for hereby is my Father glorified, if you bear much fruit." Remember, therefore, that I died for your impenitent friends as well as for you, and that it is for My glory as well as their good, that they also should be saved. Remember that I "gave my life a ransom for all," and as "a propitiation for the whole world," and "go ye therefore into all the world, and preach my gospel to every creature." Remember that "my kingdom is not of this world," and is entrusted, therefore, to the zeal, liberality, self-denial, and self-sacrifice of its members; and as you have "freely received, freely give." Be willing to communicate and ready to distribute, that by your liberality, and activity, and devotion, the Gospel "may have free course, and be glorified." And remember how opposed the world is both to Me and to you,

and how as it hated Me it will hate you also. "Walk, therefore, in wisdom towards them that are without," "that wisdom may be justified of her children," "and that they may be ashamed who speak evil of your good conversation in Christ." Be very jealous, therefore, for My honor, and for your own usefulness, and "watch and pray, lest you fall into the snares of the devil," and the Gospel, through your coldness, dishonesty, covetousness, or unchristian conduct, be blasphemed.

Up, Christians, up! the Saviour calls,
The work brooks no delay;
On you the sacred duty falls,
To preach the Gospel day:
And many must run to and fro,
Ere knowledge like an ocean flow.

Up, Christians, up! the moments fly;
And while you count the cost,
Ten thousand sinners round you die,
And are forever lost!
Can these the realms of darkness fill,
And you be reckoned guiltless still?

Up, Christians, up! the field is wide,
And white with ripen'd grain;
Forth to the labor, side by side,
A faithful, vigorous train:
Your Master's high approval win,
And bring the Gospel harvest in.

VI. Finally, says Christ, Do this in remembrance of what I will yet be and do for you. I will come again, the second time, to judge the world in righteousness. As oft, therefore, as ye eat this bread and drink this wine, ye do show the Lord's death till he come, "looking for the glorious hope and that blessed appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." "The harvest is the end of the world. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matth. xiii. 39–43.)

And as, after death, there is to every man that judgment, which anticipates the judgment of the great day, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God;" "for we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that

every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. v. 10.) Remember, that as I must "judge the world in righteousness," this judgment "must begin at the house of God." While, therefore, I am "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of great kindness," while I am not "willing that any should perish, but that all should turn unto Me and live," and while I "will in nowise cast out any" "that come unto me, however weary and heavy laden;" nevertheless, remember that my "eyes are as a flame of fire," to detect the hypocrite and the formalist. I cannot "look upon sin but with abhorrence," nor "pass by transgression" with impunity. And, therefore, if "the righteous," or any who are professedly such, "commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it." Remember, then, that there is such a thing as "the form of godliness," where there is not "the power," and "a name to live" while there is only death. If "any man then who is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an ex-

tortioner," I will put away from me "that wicked person." Do you "forsake the assembling of yourself together" with my disciples, "as the manner of some is;" do you "forget to entertain strangers;" do you "love this present world;" do you "love father or mother, or houses or lands, more than me;" do you "restrain prayer before God;" do you "forget God" in your family; do you live unto yourself and not unto Me, "who died for you?"—then forget not that "in the day when I shall be revealed from heaven with my mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,"—you "run fearful hazard of being punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (because our testimony among them was believed,) in that day," when He will "pour out His fury upon the Heathen and upon all that call not upon His name, and when all who love not the Lord Jesus Christ shall be anathema maranatha."

Remember, then, dear reader, what Christ says to you. Remember Him in what He was, what He became, what He did, what He is, and what He will be. How terrible is He as an enemy, and how estimable is He as a friend!—a friend always at hand, able and willing to help, able and ready to advise, and able and ready to protect. His grace is sufficient for every trial, and His strength adequate to every weakness; and you may come with boldness to His throne of grace, in the assurance that you shall there obtain grace and mercy in every time of need. Let past experience embolden and encourage you to do this in humble, cheerful, and joyful remembrance of Him, by whose grace you have come thus far. Here devote yourself to Him, and implore his grace, that you may strive even until death shall terminate your labors in rest and peace and joy.

Such, then, being the nature of the Lord's Supper, it is at once apparent that it is the most holy, solemn, and spiritual service in which man can engage. It brings us into the very presence-chamber of the King of Saints, there to hold converse and communion with the Lord that bought us.

How sweet and awful is the place! It is none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven. It is holy ground. Holiness alone becometh it. To all profane and unbelieving despisers it is as a consuming fire. Let all such keep back, and draw not hither till they put off the old man with his deceitful lusts, and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. "For my own part," said Calvin, when required by the Council and Senate to admit Bertelier to the communion, "after the example of Chrysostom, I avow that I will suffer myself to be slain at the table, rather than allow this hand to deliver the sacred symbols of the Lord's body and blood to adjudged despisers of God." This was uttered with such authority, and produced such an effect, that Perrin, the President, himself immediately whispered to Bertelier that he must not present himself as a communicant. He accordingly withdrew; and the sacred ordinance, says Beza, "was celebrated with a profound silence, and under a solemn awe in all present, as if the Deity himself had been visible among them." Yes, the Deity is present, really present. "There am I," says Christ; "Lo, I am with you always."

Our Lord unseen, yet ever near,
His presence makes us feel
That we inspired with holy fear,
May reverently kneel.

Our communion, therefore, is a personal approach to a personal and present Saviour. Believing in God, we believe also in Him.

We need not now ascend the heavens,
To bring our blessed Saviour down;
Here every heart His face enlivens,
He is himself his banquet's crown;
To every faithful soul appears,
And shows His real presence here.

Yes, my dear reader, this is not merely a commemoration—it is a COMMUNION. The King is among His guests. He comes in and abides with them, and sups with them. But He comes down as a deliverer—a Saviour—a Sanctifier, and a Comforter, to all that mourn in Zion—to all that look for His appearing, and to all that come unto Him, "desiring to see Jesus," and to be "healed of their sins." And as the elements evidently set before us Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and as every act of the minister represents Christ, in His gracious and condescending presence and power, a very present help and hope—so also does every act of the

communicant imply a personal faith in this present Saviour, love to Him, coming to Him, and appropriation of Him as a living, loving, all-seeing, and all-sufficient Saviour.

In coming then to the communion, endeavor to realize all that Christ here teaches, offers, promises, and pledges to you as a poor, needy, helpless sinner. Come to Him as such. Come as really desiring and requiring all that is here signified, signed and sealed.

Come, that your soul may know
The blessings of Christ's love,
The streams that through the desert flow,
The manna from above.

Come, and relying on His word,
Be filled with heavenly food;
Your meat, the body of the Lord,
Your drink, His precious blood.

Come, and His commands obey,—
Say, now, O God, I'm thine,
And go rejoicing on your way,
Renewed with strength divine.

Come to meet Christ now, that you may be prepared to meet Him and to lean on Him all through the wilderness, and to find Him your rod and staff as you pass over the Jordan of death. The day and the hour of your depar-

ture may be near, even at such a moment as you think not of. Oh, come then, knowing that your hour is at hand, and eat this passover, as if it might be to you the last as well as the first.

On the morning on which Wishart, the first martyr of the Reformation in Scotland, was to be executed, the priests sent two Franciscan monks to acquaint him that the time of his death drew near, and to ask if he wished to confess his sins to them, as was customary. He replied, that he had no need for friars, nor any wish to converse with them, but if they would gratify him so far, he would be happy to be visited by the learned man who had preached the day before.* On this being reported, the sub-prior, after he had obtained the permission of the bishop, came to the prison in the Castle, where Wishart was confined, and held a long conversation with him, intermingled with many tears. At length, after he had ceased weeping, from which he could not refrain, he kindly asked, whether he would not wish to partake

* John Winram, Sub-Prior of St. Andrews, who was at that time a friend to the Reformation, but not openly, for fear of the priests.

of the sacrament of the Supper? "Most willingly," answered the martyr. "If, according to Christ's appointment, it be shown forth in both kinds, namely, in bread and wine." Winram immediately returned to the bishops, and, with a view of conciliating them, informed them that the prisoner solemnly affirmed his innocence of the crime with which he was charged, and that he did not say so to avert his impending death, but only to leave a testimony to man of that innocence which was known to God. The effect, however, was quite opposite: the Cardinal (Beaton) inflamed with rage, exclaimed, "As for you, Mr. Sub-Prior, we know very well already what you are." Winram then asked whether the prisoner would be allowed the communion of the holy body and blood of the Saviour? when the other priests, after having consulted a little together, gave it as their opinion, "that it did not appear proper that an obstinate heretic, condemned by the Church, should have any Church privileges." This determination was reported to Wishart; and it does not appear that he saw Mr. Winram again.

At nine o'clock the friends and domestics of

the governor having assembled to breakfast, he was asked whether he would partake with them: to which he frankly replied, "With more pleasure than I have done for some time past; for I perceive you are devout men, and fellow-members of the same body of Christ with me, and also because I know this will be the last food I shall partake of on earth." Then addressing the governor, "I invite you, in the name of God, and by that love which you bear to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to sit down at this table a little, and attend to me while I address an exhortation to you, and pray over the bread which we are about to eat, as brethren of Christ; and then I shall bid you farewell." In the meantime, the table being covered, as is the custom, with a linen cloth, and bread placed upon it, Wishart began a short and clear discourse upon the Last Supper, and the sufferings and death of Christ, and spoke about half an hour. He especially exhorted them to lay aside wrath, envy, and malice, that their minds might be filled with love to one another, and so become perfect members of Christ, who daily intercedes that we through Him, our sacrifice, may obtain eternal life.

Having spoken to this effect, he gave God thanks, and broke the bread and gave a little to each; and in like manner, he gave the wine, after he himself had tasted, entreating them to remember, in this sacrament, along with him, the last memorial of Christ's death; but for himself, a more bitter cup was prepared, for no other reason than preaching the gospel. After this he again retired to his chamber, and finished his own private devotions.

Probably, since the institution of the Lord's Supper, it has seldom been celebrated under circumstances more solemn and affecting than on this first celebration of it in Protestant Scotland. Wishart was a man of the most mild and amiable temper, of a sweet and venerable appearance, and his manners are said to have been particularly engaging. He had been a kind intimate in the governor's family for nearly two months, and during that time seems to have conciliated the affections of his keeper and attendants, the most of whom had probably through his means, become "partakers of like precious faith," as he addressed them, upon this occasion, as persons whom he knew to be fellow-members of the same body of Christ. In

less than three hours he was to stand in the presence of that God and Saviour whose dying love they were commemorating, and to be honored, to glorify his name, by passing through the flames to heaven. With what energy would he address them,—with what reverential attention would they listen! With what a pressure of the powers of the world to come resting upon him, would he speak and they hear, and both participate in the two-fold emblems of a Saviour's complete and perfect sacrifice. Scarcely can a scene of deeper interest be imagined, excepting, perhaps, some which soon followed, when,

"Leaning on his spear,
The lyart vet'ran heard the word of God,"

and from this holy banquet gathered strength to contend earnestly for the faith, and to witness a good confession before many witnesses on the gibbet or at the stake.

But such ought every communion season to be. It was the last command of Christ which instituted it, and His last act to observe it. The Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread. It was the darkest night that ever was in this world, and yet the

brightest,—the night when His love to sinners was put to the severest test. "Knowing that He should now depart out of this world unto the Father, and having loved His own, He loved them unto the end," and therefore to comfort their sorrowful and desponding hearts,

When on that immortal even
Ever known again,
The unleavened bread was given,
The Lamb of God was slain.

And as holy writ had told,
In dim type of old,
Ate they the dread sacrifice,
Girt for great emprise.

Then for men of every nation
Broke Christ the sacred bread,
That on Him and His salvation
Each and all might feed.

And the cup—His blood to save—
Unto all He gave,
Pledge of everlasting bliss,
"Drink ye all—drink all—of this."*

"And now," said Christ, after administering the ordinance, "I am no more in the world. I come to Thee. But these are in the world, and I come to Thee."

* An ancient Latin Hymn.

And so is each communion season "the Last Supper" to some. It is a coming unto God. It is a preparation for their burial. It is their last spiritual meal—their last act of faith and hope and consecration—their last communion with saints on earth, and with an unseen Saviour in heaven.

He knows what wandering hearts we have,
Apt to forget His glorious face,
And to refresh our minds, He gave
These kind memorials of His grace.

Come, then, into His very presence. Set your affections on Him, that though you see Him not with bodily eyes, yet believing, you may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Christ and His love fill every thought,
And faith and love be fixed on Him.

This every communicant is encouraged to do, and this the very act of participation necessarily implies.

*I. *He takes the bread and the wine.*—When the minister offers the bread and wine to those at the table, this represents Christ freely offered

* We chiefly adopt the simple and satisfactory illustration of the fervent in spirit, McCheyne.

to sinners, even the chief. The receiving of the bread and wine means—I do thankfully receive the broken, bleeding Saviour as my Surety. The act of taking that bread and wine is an appropriating act; it is saying before God, and angels, and men, and devils, "I do flee to the Lord Jesus Christ as my refuge." Noah's entering into the ark was an appropriating act. Let others fly to the tops of their houses, to their castles and towers, to the ragged rocks, to the summits of the highest mountains,—as for me, I believe the word of God, and flee to this ark as my only refuge. (Heb. xi. 7.) When the man-slayer fled into the city of refuge, it was an appropriating act. As he entered breathless at the gates of Hebron, his friends might cry to him, Flee into the wilderness, or, Flee beyond Jordan! But no, he would say, I believe the Word of God, that I shall be safe only within these walls; this is my refuge city, here only will I hide! (Josh. xx.) When an Israelite brought an offering of the herd or of the flock, when the priest had bound it with cords to the horns of the altar, the offerer laid his hands upon the head of the lamb; this was an appropriating act, as much as to say, I take

this lamb as dying for me. The world might say, How will this save you? mend your life, give alms to the poor. I believe the Word of God, he would say; I do not wish to bear my own sins, I lay them on the Lamb of God. (Lev. i. 4.) When the woman trembling came behind Jesus, and touched the hem of His garment, this also was an appropriating act. Her friends might say to her, Come and try some more physicians, or, Wait till you are somewhat better. No, said she, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be made whole." (Mark v. 28.) In the 42d Psalm, David's enemies said to him continually, "Where is thy God?" This made tears his meat night and day. It was like a sword in his bones. But in the 43d Psalm, he gathers courage, and says, "I will go unto the altar of God," where the Lamb was slain; and then he says, "Unto God my exceeding joy." You say, I have no God; behold, I take this Lamb as slain for me, and therefore God is my God. In the Song of Solomon, when the bride found him whom her soul loved, she says, "I held him, and would not let him go." This was true appropriating faith. The world might say to her, "Come this way, and we will show

thee other beloveds, fairer than thy beloved." Nay, saith she, "I held him, and would not let him go." "This is my beloved, and this is my friend." (Song iii. 4.)

Just such, beloved, is the meaning of receiving broken bread and poured out wine at the Lord's Table. It is the most solemn appropriating act of all your lives. It is declaring by signs, "I do enter into the ark, I flee into the city of refuge, I lay my hand on the head of the Lamb, I do touch the hem of His garment, I do take Jesus to be my Lord and my God; I hold him, and by grace I will never let him go." It is a deliberate closing with Christ, by means of signs, in the presence of witnesses. When the bride—that we may again apply and perfect our former illustration—accepts the right-hand in marriage before many witnesses, it is a solemn declaration to all the world, that she does accept the bridegroom to be her only husband. So, in the Lord's Supper, when you receive that bread and wine, you solemnly declare, that, forsaking all others, you heartily do receive the Lord Jesus as your only Lord and Saviour.

A word to trembling, believing souls. This feast is spread for you. "Eat, O friends;

drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, come. If you are "weak in the faith," ministers are commanded to receive you. If, even for the first time in your life, Christ now appear full and free to you, so that you cannot but believe on Him, do not hesitate to come. Come to the table, leaning on the Beloved, and you will have John's place there. You will lean peacefully upon His breast.

Think, while you eat and drink,
Of all for thee Christ bore:
The cup that He would drink,
The crown of thorns He wore,
The garden, the betrayal, and the gloom,
The pavement, and the mountain, and the tomb.

Be this, His flesh, thy cure,
His bloody sweat thy balm,
His blood thy soul secure,
His agony thy calm;
To-day thy fears and anguish pass away
In joy and peace that shall abide alway.

II. *Every communicant eats the bread and drinks the wine.*—"Take, eat"—"Drink ye all of it." Eating and drinking in this ordinance, imply feeding upon Christ. It is said

of bread, that it "strengtheneth man's heart," and of wine, that it "maketh glad the heart of man." Bread is the staff of life, and wine is very reviving to those who, like Timothy, have often infirmities. They are the greatest nutritive blessings which man possesses. Now to partake of them in the Lord's Supper, is as much as to say, I do feed on Jesus, as my only strength; "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." To take the bread into your hand, is saying by signs, "Christ is made of God unto me righteousness." To feed upon it, is saying, "Christ is made unto me sanctification."

When Israel fed on manna for forty years, and drank water from the rock, they were strengthened for their journey through the howling wilderness. This was a picture of believers journeying through this world. They feed every day on Christ their strength; He is their daily manna; He is the rock that follows them. When the bride sat under the shadow of the apple-tree, she said, "His fruit is sweet to my taste;" and again, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." Believers, this is a picture of you. No sooner are you sheltered by the Saviour, than

you are nourished and renewed by Him. He comforts your hearts, and stablishes you in every good word and work. In the 36th Psalm, when David speaks of men trusting under the wings of the Lord Jesus, he adds, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." Little children, you know by experience what this means. When you were brought to believe on the Son of God, you were adopted into His family, fed with the children's bread, and your hearts filled with the holy pleasures of God. The same thing is represented in feeding on the bread and wine. It is a solemn declaration in the sight of the whole world, that you have been put into the clefts of the smitten rock, and that you are feeding on the honey treasured there. It is declaring that you have sat down under Christ's shadow, and that you are comforted and nourished by the fruit of that tree of life. It is saying, "I have come to trust under the shadow of His wings, and now I drink of the river of His pleasures." It is a sweet declaration of your own helplessness and weakness, and that Christ is all your strength—all your life.

All, therefore, who are really "looking unto Jesus" are invited to come to the Lord's Table. You may feel like a sick person recovering from a fever; you are without strength, you cannot lift your hand or your head; yet you look unto Jesus as your strength; He died for sinners, and He lives for them; you look to Him day by day. You say, He is my bread, He is my wine; I have no strength but what comes from Him. Come you and feed at the Lord's Table, and welcome. Or you feel like the traveller when he arrives at an inn, faint and exhausted: you have no strength to go further, you cannot take another step; but you lean on Jesus as your strength; you believe that word, "Because I live ye shall live also." Come you and feed on this bread and wine, with your staff in your hand and shoes on your feet, and you will "go on your way rejoicing." Feeble branches need most nourishment. The more you feel your weakness, the amazing depravity of your heart, the power of Satan, and the hatred of the world, the more need have you to lean on Jesus, to feed on this bread and wine. And you are all the more welcome.

Oh Thou, that nailed upon the bleeding tree,
Breathest Thy soul away, let me draw nigh,
And hang my weary heart and eyes on Thee.
To look on Thee, in Thy sore agony,
Shall heal the serpent's wounds that long hath strove
And filled my veins with death. While Thou dost die,
I from Thy throes am born to life above:
'Tis thus Thou build'st Thy martyrs, and 'tis thus
That Faith herself doth anchor on Thy love.

While with Thine arms outstretched, bleeding and bare,
As to Thy throne of Godhead, Thou to Thee
Dost draw the big round world, let me draw near,
And clinging at the foot of that dread tree,
Beneath Thy withered frame and bleeding side,
Hide myself, and look up, O Lord, to Thee,
That only hope and refuge, only pride
Of a lost world. Oh, may'st Thou o'er me reign,
And in the fountains of my heart abide.*

III. *Every communicant shares the bread and wine with others.*—The Lord's Table is not a selfish solitary meal. To eat bread and wine alone is not the Lord's Supper. This is the family meal of that family spoken of in Eph. iii. 15. You do not eat and drink alone, therefore, by yourself; you share the bread and wine with all at the same table. Jesus said, "Drink ye ALL of it."

* A translation of an ancient hymn.

This expresses *love to the brethren*, a sweet feeling of oneness with "all those who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity," a heart-filling desire that all should have the same peace, the same joy, the same spirit, the same holiness, the same heaven with yourself. You remember the golden candlestick in the temple, with its seven lamps. It was fed out of one golden bowl on the top of it, which was constantly full of oil. The oil ran down the shaft of the candlestick, and was distributed to each lamp, by seven golden pipes or branches. All the lamps shared the same oil. It passed from branch to branch. None of the lamps kept the oil to itself. It was shared among them all. So it is in the vine-tree. The sap ascends from the root, and fills all the branches. When one branch is satisfied, it lets the stream pass on to the next. Nay, it carries the rich juice to the smaller twigs and tendrils, that all may have their share,—that all may bear their precious fruit. So it is with the body. The blood comes from the heart in full and nourishing stream,—it flows to all the members,—one member conducts it to another, that all may be kept alive, and all may grow.

So it is in the Lord's Supper. The bread and wine are passed from hand to hand, to show that we are members one of another. "For we being many, are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." 1 Cor. x. 17. It is a solemn declaration, that you are one with all true Christians—one in peace, one in feeling, one in holiness; and that if one member suffer, you will suffer with it, or if one member be honored, you will rejoice with it. You thereby declare that you are branches of the true Vine, and are vitally united to all the branches,—that you wish the same Holy Spirit to pervade every bosom. You declare that you are lamps of the same golden candlestick, and that you wish the same golden oil, to keep you and them burning and shining as lights in a dark world.

Dear believer, you "know that you are passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren." This pure and holy love is one of the first feelings in the converted bosom. It is divine and imperishable. You are a companion of all that fear God. It would be hell to you to spend eternity with wicked men. Come and show this love at the feast of love.

The table in the upper room at Jerusalem was but a type and earnest of the table in the upper room of glory. Soon we shall exchange the table below for the table above, where we shall give full expression to our love to all eternity. There no betrayers can come—"no unclean thing can enter." Jesus shall be at the head of the table, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.

Be known to us in breaking bread,
But do not then depart;
Saviour, abide with us, and spread
Thy table in our heart.

There sup with us in love divine,
Thy body and thy blood,
That living bread, that heavenly wine,
Be our immortal food.

Within a short period the spirit of the late Dr. Adolphe Monod, the ornament of the French Protestant pulpit, and one of the most eloquent and devoted men of his generation, passed, through much tribulation, into the kingdom of God. For two years he struggled with an excruciating malady, before entering into his rest. And how was he sustained while passing through that valley and shadow of

death? "As for me personally," said he, "I am in peace. Him whom I have preached is also Him in whom I have believed. Whatever moment He has appointed to take me back to himself, I know He will sustain me in the last struggle; and I enter, in the measure of my weak faith, into the thought of the apostle: 'I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.'"

He had always been of a melancholy cast of mind, but became more cheerful as he was more afflicted. Once, when his sufferings were very great, he was heard, whilst engaged in prayer, saying, "I have never been happier than I am now. I have never felt Thee so near me. I have never been less sad than since thou hast so sorely afflicted me."

This gracious frame of mind he retained until the end, his patience and submission increasing as his sufferings grew more intense; and many were the occasions when he testified as to his faith, and his entire reliance on his Saviour's blood. On one occasion, in the presence of the members of his family, when he was about to take the communion with them, he thus expressed himself:—"It is only by

faith we receive the Lord in the communion; that we eat his flesh and drink his blood. Then we live by Him, as he lived by the Father; and thereby our faith will not be the simple knowledge, but the possession of Jesus Christ. It is not knowing Jesus Christ that saves and sanctifies; it is *having* Jesus Christ. . . . In taking the communion with you, I declare that as we are called to it by God, I come into his presence as a poor sinner, whose whole life witnesses against him before God; and whose Christian works are a pure gift of Divine grace, in which he only interfered to alloy them, and to mix therein human infirmity and corruption. . . . But at the same time I have a firm, simple, and peaceful hope in the redemption of Jesus Christ; in his blood, in his sacrifice; and if I could find any clearer expression I would use it, that all the glory may be given to the efficacy of the blood of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, atoning for my sins before God, supplying by his merits the good I have not done, and repairing the evil I have done. O wonder of grace! sin is abolished. I no more stand before God as a sinner. 'Jesus Christ has been made unto us sanctification and re-

demption;' 'He has been made sin for us, that we might be righteous—that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' I am clothed with His righteousness, as He is clothed with my sin; God can no more condemn me than he can condemn his Son, and I stand before him as his beloved Christ! Faith in this sacrifice is my only hope."

He had then already been deprived of the privilege of public worship for four months, and it became evident that no amelioration could be hoped for, when the thought occurred to him that he might still gather a few friends around him, to partake of the communion with them. The first meeting of the kind was held on the 14th of October last; and they were continued every Sunday without interruption for six months. These meetings were a true practical evangelical alliance, as they were conducted by ministers of all denominations —Reformed, Lutheran, Independent, Free Church, Wesleyans; and all those who assembled—and they were as numerous as the little sick-room would allow—felt that they were indeed one body and one soul with their afflicted brother, and that, like him, they had no other

hope of salvation but the cross of their Saviour. Mr. Monod himself was able to say a few words at every meeting, however much he might have suffered during the foregoing week. For this privilege he felt very thankful, and acknowledged it as a special favor. Those who heard him then will agree that he was never more powerful in the pulpit than he was on that bed of sickness, when he addressed them briefly, on the main points of Christian faith and love, and collected the little strength he had, after a week of constant suffering, to urge them to consecrate themselves entirely to the Lord's service.

The last of these meetings took place on the 30th of March last. Although very weak that day, strength was granted him to make a prayer, which was as his farewell to the Church. It was full of humiliation and thanksgiving towards God, of love and gratitude towards his brethren. "O God!" he said, "whose name is love; who never hast, and never will do any thing but in love; how can I be thankful enough when I see these friends, whose love for me has assembled them around my bed of sickness and suffering, and what

more thou alone knowest! I rejoice in their love. To whom has more ever been shown than to me? Should I not be the most ungrateful of men if I were not the most thankful? Therefore I return thee thanks, O my God; and I thank thee still more, if possible, for thy love that has so sorely afflicted me, but which has at the same time supported me; and I confess before these friends, that thou hast never let me want any thing, though I have been so often wanting in faith and patience; and though I am so far from having attained that perfect patience to which I most ardently aspire. But thou hast been all mercy, and as long as I have breath of life and strength, I will declare it before them. I thank thee, O my God, for the freeness with which thou hast manifested thy goodness towards me, in freely forgiving all my sins; I, the greatest of sinners, the least of thy children, the poorest of thy servants; but I also, whom thou hast loaded with mercy, and made use of to advance thy kingdom, even in the extreme weakness and pain in which I am plunged to-day. I bless thee that thou hast given me a Saviour! Without Him, I confess, O my God, I should have

been irrevocably lost, and now in the depths of despair. But I have a Saviour! who has freely saved me by his blood which was shed, and I will make it known that I rest entirely upon his blood shed for me. I confess that all my righteousness, all my works which have been praised, all my preaching appreciated and admired, all is, in my sight, as filthy rags, and that there is nothing in me capable of subsisting before the light of thy countenance and the brightness of thy holiness. But now it is not I that shall be judged; it is Christ in me; and I know that he will enter, and I with him, and that we are so closely united that he could never enter and leave me without. O God, I thank thee for all these friends, to whom thou hast granted the same privilege and the same consolation, and to whom thou hast deigned also to give thy Holy Spirit, to apply to their souls the free gift of eternal life by the blood of Jesus Christ."*

Well, then, may it be said, that "the Lord's Supper is the sweetest of all ordinances." It is fragrant with the love of Christ who is "the beginning, middle and end of it,"—its author

* See the full account as given in The Presbyterian.

and its finisher,—its life and power. Here Christ is all and in all, and here "all things are ours," found through Christ strengthening our faith to ask and expect them, opening our hearts to receive them, and out of His own infinite fullness imparting grace and mercy in every time of need, and sufficient for every emergency.

Pardon and peace to dying men,
And endless life are given,
Through the rich blood that Jesus shed,
To raise our souls to heaven.

Millions of souls in glory now
Were fed and fostered here;
And millions more, still on their way,
Around the board appear.

Here Saviour, here Thyself reveal,
And be Thy glory known,
Affix Thy blessed Spirit's seal,
Make all my heart Thine own.

"HE BROUGHT ME TO THE BANQUETING HOUSE."
Song ii. 4.

While in sweet communion feeding
On this earthly bread and wine,
Saviour, may we see Thee bleeding
On the cross, to make us Thine!

Now, our eyes forever closing
To this fleeting world below,
On Thy gentle breast reposing,
Teach us, Lord, thy grace to know.

Though unseen, be ever near us,
With the still small voice of love;
Whisp'ring words of peace to cheer us,
Every doubt and fear remove;
Bring before us all the story
Of Thy life and death of woe;
And with hopes of endless glory,
Wean our hearts from all below.

AN ANCIENT SACRAMENTAL HYMN.

FROM THE LATIN.

Most gracious, all-sufficient Saviour,
Who 'neath these symbols giv'st Thyself to me,
My heart of hearts prostrate before Thee falls,
But cannot reach Thee; contemplation lost
In wonder, love, and praise. I hear Thy words,
"This is My body, this is My blood,
Broken and shed for sin's most full remission."
Thy word of truth hath spoken: I believe
And trust in Thee, who art Thyself the truth.
And I would on Thee gaze, and make the prayer
Of the poor penitent thief—Remember me!
Though I behold Thee not, nor feel Thy wounds,
Like Thomas, I would lift mine eyes and cry,
Thou art my Lord and God! Make me believe
And love Thee, and have my hope in Thee.

O blest memorial of Thy Sacrifice!
True living bread, the bread that gives true life,
Make my soul taste Thee, feed on Thee, and live!
O Fount of purity, Jesus my Lord!
Unclean, unclean am I; Make Thou me clean
With Thine own blood, of which one little drop
Can cleanse the guilty world of all her sin.
Oh, Thou whom I behold beneath this veil,
Grant one thing unto me, for which I thirst,
Suppliant, I pray Thee, that I may behold
Thy gracious countenance without the veil,
And seeing then Thy glory, may be blest!

"TAKE, EAT, THIS IS MY BODY."

Matt. xxvi. 26.

Bread of the world, in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed!
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead:

Look on this heart, by sorrow broken;
Look on these tears, by sinners shed,
And be Thy feast to me the token
That, by Thy grace, my soul is fed.

STRENGTH FOR CONFLICT.

Soldier of Christ! thou warrior tied
And bound by holiest vow,
Oh! what hast thou to do with rest and ease?
Still wipe thy manly brow.

Strengthen thy feeble knees,
And but with life thine armor lay aside.
For yet a little while
When thou on thy last enemy hast trod,
Shalt enter with a smile
On rest eternal—yea! the rest of God!

Approach then, thou with heart sincere,
Show thy firm allegiance here;
'Twas Himself who gave the sign—
Brake the bread and poured the wine.

Faithful to His last command,
Take these symbols in thy hand;
Eat, and Jesus suffering see;
Drink, and ponder 'twas for thee.

HOW TO APPROACH.

"And did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."
Acts ii. 46.

Approach not the altar
With gloom in thy soul;
Nor let thy feet falter
From terror's control!

God loves not the sadness
Of fear and distrust;
Oh! serve Him with gladness—
The Gentle, the Just!

Confiding, believing,
Oh! enter always
"His courts with thanksgiving—
His portals with praise!"

Nor come to the temple
With pride in thy mien;
But lowly and simple,
In courage serene.

Bring meekly before Him
The faith of a child;
Bow down and adore Him,
With heart undefiled.

And "by the still waters,"
And through the green shade,
With Zion's glad daughters
Thy path shall be made.

COMMUNION.

Communion of my Saviour's blood,
In Him to have my lot and part,
To prove the virtue of that flood
Which burst on Calvary from His heart;

To feed by faith on CHRIST, my bread,
His body broken on the tree;
To live in Him, my living Head,
Who died, and rose again for me;—

This be my joy and comfort here,
This pledge of future glory mine:
JESUS, in spirit now appear,
And break the bread, and pour the wine.

From Thy dear hand, may I receive
The tokens of Thy dying love,

And, while I feast on earth, believe
That I shall feast with Thee above.

Ah! there, though in the lowest place,
Thee at Thy table could I meet,
And see Thee, know Thee, face to face,
For such a moment death were sweet.

What then will their fruition be,
Who meet in heaven with blest accord?
A moment?—No, eternity!
They are FOREVER WITH THE LORD.

THE LITANY.

Lamb of God! whose bleeding love
We now recall to mind,
Send the answer from above,
And let us mercy find;
Think on us, who think on Thee,
And every burdened soul release;
Oh, remember Calvary,
And bid us go in peace!

By Thine agonizing pain,
And bloody sweat, we pray;
By Thy dying love to man,
Take all our sins away:
Burst our bonds, and set us free,
From all iniquity release;
Oh, remember Calvary,
And bid us go in peace!

Through Thy blood, by faith applied,
Let sinners pardon feel:
Speak us freely justified,
And all our sickness heal;
By Thy passion on the tree,
Let all our griefs and troubles cease;
Oh, remember Calvary,
And bid us go in peace.

CHAPTER X.

WORDS OF INSTRUCTION, OF COUNSEL AND OF WARNING.

What may and ought to be expected.

My dear reader, I must now leave you, but not, I trust alone. You will be able, I hope, to say with Christ, "and yet I am not alone because the Father is with me." Yes! God I hope will be with you, work in you to will and to do, give you the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue; invite you by His still small voice to "keep the feast;" create in you a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; "sweetly force you in," and there say to you, as you sit before him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, "Eat, O friend, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

This, dear reader, is my heart's desire and prayer to God for you. Having this hope, you will be able to say with Colonel Gardiner, "how blessed the solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper proved to me." "Often," says

Dr. Doddridge in his Memoir of that remarkable trophy of the power of divine grace to convert the most infidel, and sanctify the most impure, "have I had the pleasure to see that manly countenance softened into all the marks of humiliation and contrition on communion occasions, and to discern, in spite of all his efforts to conceal them, streams of tears flowing down from his eyes while he has been directing them to the memorials of his Redeemer's love. And some who have conversed intimately with him, after he came from that ordinance, have observed a visible abstraction from surrounding objects, by which there seemed reason to imagine that his soul was wrapped up in holy contemplation. And I particularly remember that when we had once spent a great part of the following Monday in reading together, he made an apology to me for being so absent, as he seemed, by telling me that his heart was flowing upwards, before he was aware, to Him whom, having not seen, he loved, and he was rejoicing in Him with joy so unspeakable, that he could not hold it down to creature converse."

And when faith and love are in lively exer-

cise—when like Colonel Gardiner, we examine our own selves, judge our own selves, and in conscious weakness and want, "wrestle with the angel of the covenant, and make supplications to Him with tears, and cries, "He will strengthen us like Jacob, that we may have power with God, and prevail," so as to be made conscious of His presence. "While the king," says the believing spouse, "sitteth at the table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof." And such should be the case always when we feast upon Him who "offered Himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God, a sweet smelling savor," out of whose lips is poured grace, and "all whose garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces whereby they have made thee glad." Even as "God hath anointed Him with gladness," so "with gladness and rejoicing shall His people be brought, they shall enter into the king's palace." Only let your heart and your expectation be towards Him, saying, "let my beloved come into my garden, and eat of His pleasant fruits," and He will be heard by the ear of faith, saying, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse. I have gathered

my myrrh with my spice. I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey. I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

How can it be otherwise. By that "one offering offered up once for all, Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "All power is now in His hands." The Father loveth the Son, and hath given to Him all things here and in heaven so that He might be Head over all things to His church both in heaven and on earth. He "has received gifts for the rebellious also," and "ever liveth to give repentance and remission of sins." To Him, thus mighty to save, we look in all, and through all, the services of the communion. He is our altar, our sacrifice, our High Priest, our King. We are His friends chosen *in* Christ, given *to* Christ, called and adopted by Christ, and accepted by God for Christ's sake. We here perceive the love of God the Father, the grace of God the Son, and the comfort, advocacy, consolation, and help, of God the Holy Ghost.

Having "in the end," or "evening of the world, put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," Christ calls His disciples apart, that

here, encircled by His family, He may feast Himself with His redeemed, and they with Him, in this holy Supper. He is as present now in spirit, as He was with His first disciples in body, and yet a little while and we shall be brought into His upper sanctuary to celebrate the ordinance anew at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and then and there we shall behold Him by sight, as we now do by faith. Then we shall be with Him where He is, see Him as He is, and be satisfied with His likeness, as now we see Him through the glass of ordinances darkly, and yet believingly and rejoicingly. Being united to Christ, we here partake of His fullness, and having life in Christ, are quickened together with Him who is our life, and with whom, when He appears, we shall appear with Him in glory.

In the Lord's Supper Christ is the substance of all its shadows and the reality of all its forms. The Lord's Supper is a fresh opening and reading of Christ's will. It is the New Testament or bequest of that inheritance—that eternal weight of glory—and that grace and mercy,—including every good and perfect gift, and "all those things we have need of,"—

which Christ hath purchased for us. We come here by His invitation to meet Him, and to assure our hearts before Him. "Gather ye," He says, "my saints together, those that have made a covenant with Me," that here in my banqueting house my banner over them may be love. "If any man thirst, let him come and drink." "And the Spirit and the Bride say, come: and let him that heareth say, come: and let him that is athirst, come: and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." Blessed are the poor in spirit, the needy in soul, the halt by sin, the blind in heart, yea, the dead in trespasses and sins, for even such, all such are bidden to the feast. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom." The Lord's table is the Lord's gift, and as He is the Host, so does He provide the fare, give the preparation of the heart, and "the garments of salvation." And every poor, needy, and hopeless sinner who comes to Him as a free, full, and complete Saviour, is a welcome guest—welcome to come and put in his claim for the rich gifts which Christ has left and secured for him,

to receive a present earnest of them, and to feel that he is an heir, "an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away."

"Truly we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." We have to do with Jesus. Desire and expect, above all things, therefore, at the Lord's table, the presence of your Saviour. Will not Jesus come to the feast? Yes. "I will be with you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come unto you. I am with you always. I will bless you and do you good." Come, then, boldly, that you "may obtain mercy, and find grace to help you in time of need." Open up your heart to Him who "searcheth the reins and hearts, and unto whose eyes all things are naked and open." Say unto Him, "try me, O Lord, prove me, search my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. O Lord, send Thy light and Thy truth. Let them lead me, let them bring me unto Thy holy hill and to Thy tabernacles. Then shall I go unto the altar of God, (i. e. Christ,) to God my exceeding joy. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My

soul shall be joyful in my God. For He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation. He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. As a bridegroom decketh herself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels. Even so, Lord Jesus, come. Now, even now, let mine eyes see Thy salvation."

Remember, however, that while Christ waiteth to be gracious, "while He wishes every guest to worship in the beauty of holiness," to sit before Him as in heavenly places, "to comprehend more of the length and breadth, and height, and depth of the love of God," that nevertheless Christ comes to His table as a King, clothed with the sovereignty of grace and power. He giveth *how* and *when*, and as "it seemeth to Him good"—to "all severally as He will." We are bound, but He is free. We are ignorant, He is wisdom. We know not what a day may bring forth, we know not even what to ask for as we ought, we know not what spirit we are of, and therefore we know not what things we have most need of—but He knoweth the end from the beginning. He knows all things, and

He will make all things work together for our good. Let us then trust Him for His grace. Let us feel confidence, that as no trial shall be permitted to befall us but what He will enable us to bear, so He will also order His gifts, and graces, and blessings, so as to prove Himself a very present help, according to our need. "None shall go away empty." None of His little ones need despond or fear that Jesus will overlook or pass them by, and not be known by them in the breaking of bread. They shall every one have his own several, personal, appropriate, and with a seasonable and suitable supply. Not all alike in measure or in quality—not all alike in character or experience—but all alike in grace—all alike in the wise adaptation of Christ's imparted blessing to their wants and woes, their trials and temptations—to their direction, encouragement, reproof, rebuke, correction, humiliation, and thus to their sanctification here, and their salvation hereafter. "Jesus knoweth their hearts"—their lives and their lusts, their pride too, and self-confidence, and all those temptations that do so easily beset them. His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, winnow

His wheat, and separate the chaff, and as a skilful Refiner, adapt all His movements, so as to purge away the dross, and render the gold seven times purified.

Like a wise Householder, therefore, Christ will bring forth and set before every guest His meat in due season, milk for babes, strong meat for the full grown, and wine on the lees well refined for the faint and weary, and him that is ready to perish. All graces are His gifts. Faith is His gift, and so is peace, and hope, and joy, and assurance. Wisdom and strength, and fortitude, and patience, and resignation, and rejoicing in tribulation, as well as hope of the glory of God, are also His gifts. Repentance, and humility, and godly sorrow, and mortification of the flesh, and victory over the world, and self-denial, and taking up the cross,—all these also are among the gifts and graces of our Lord and Master.

In the Lord's Supper there are, therefore, diversities of gifts and differences of operation, and variety of administration. But they are all from the same Lord. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." To every one of them He says, "Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. This people I have

formed for Myself, they shall show forth My praise." Every one of them also can say in return, "The Lord is my portion, my Lord and my God. Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides Thee." And to every one of them Christ again answers and says, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. I am come, that ye may have life, and that ye may have it more abundantly."

The state and condition of each communicant is as much, then, the object of Christ's regard, as their person and their salvation. And His dealings with them, and His gifts to them are ordered accordingly.

As the wind bloweth *when* and *where*, and *as* it listeth—as the rain cometh down from heaven in that measure and in those places which it pleaseth Him that sends it*—and as

* In like manner the lightning, when it breaketh forth, is easy to be seen; and after the same manner, the wind bloweth in every country. And when God commandeth the clouds to go over the whole world, they do as they are bidden.—*Apocrypha.*

the seed cast into the earth beareth fruit in some thirty, in some, sixty, and in some an hundred fold, so it is in the communion of the Lord's Supper. It accomplishes in all that which pleaseth Christ, and that for which He hath sent it. And let it be remembered that as it is just as easy for God to send a strong wind as the gentle breeze or the calm, and the full and flooding rain as the soft and silent dew, and to multiply seed an hundred as thirty fold—so it is here. The difference is in Christ's purpose, and not in His power, in His providence, and not in His promises, and in His adaptation of His gifts to our graces or gracelessness, and not in any want of loving kindness and tender concern for our best good and our greatest happiness. Many come with their pitcher to the wells of salvation, and go away without water, because they do not come with their pitchers empty, but so full of their own frames and feelings, their desires and expectations, their selfish wishes and prescribed limitations to the divine conduct, as to leave "no room to receive it." Their anxiety to be made happy, to enjoy peaceful hope, and to be comforted—like the crying of a weaned child—

actually drives away joy, beclouds hope, and destroys comfort. What they require—is not the breasts of consolation, but—the stronger food of wholesome correction, reproof, self-loathing, and humiliation, in order that forsaking all confidence in themselves, they may live by faith in the Son of God, who loved them and gave Himself for them. And if, my dear reader, you leave the table of the Lord dejected and disquieted, faint and fearing, hungry and thirsty, cold and barren, say, "Even so, Saviour, if so it seemeth good in Thy sight. Give me Thyself, and withhold what Thou wilt. Be Thou my rock and refuge, and then let the winds blow and the floods arise and beat against me. What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me. Hope thou in Christ, He is faithful, He cannot deny himself. He is able, He is willing, and will not leave me or forsake me, but will yet be the strength of my heart and my exceeding joy. My soul, hope thou in Christ."

It will always happen that at the Lord's table some will enjoy much and others less; some will weep and others sing for joy. Into

the hearts of some, Christ will put gladness, and into others fears and faintings, and self-misgivings. Some hearts will burn within them, while He talks with them by the way, and opens to them the Scriptures, and is known unto them, while to others He hideth Himself, and they walk in darkness and see no light. Some, like Mary, will lie low at the feet of Jesus, and wash His feet with their tears, and wipe them with their dishevelled hair, while others, like the beloved disciple, will be permitted to lean on His bosom and drink in life, inspiration, and bliss, from His blessed words. Some will go away rejoicing as a strong man, to run with patience the race set before them, while others will go away hanging their heads as a bulrush, and in much heaviness, because of their inward sorrow and self-upbraiding.

But none shall go away empty. Every man will receive the gift. Every man's pitcher will be filled with water out of the wells of salvation, and if one cannot strike his harp with exulting joy because he feels that Christ is His, all may say, "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." Many will say unto the Lord, "Who will show me any good. Lord, to

whom can I go but unto Thee. Thou hast the words of eternal life."

It was God's great and free mercy which first gave you, Christian, spiritual life in Christ, and at the same time arranged all His purposes so as to secure your well-being in Christ, and has so ordered His providence, that every thing should subserve and minister to the divine glory and your happiness. So that the renewed soul at the Lord's table, conscious that the Lord's grace is to his *person*, and the Lord's knowledge extends to all his *wants*, and that Jesus is at the head of the table to supply them all, feels a confidence in unbosoming himself to the Lord, as one that hath interest with the great Master of the feast. He can say, "My God knows my person, and I have found grace in his sight. He knows also every thing that concerns me, and what will best suit his own glory and my happiness. How, then, can I do otherwise than fare well, while Jesus is at the head of His table."

It is, then, as has been said, the grossest of all mistakes, and one as unhappy as it is unwarranted, to measure the Lord's grace by the Lord's gifts; or to estimate the acceptance

in which the Lord regards us by what we receive from Him, instead of drawing conclusions from what Jesus is in Himself, from His promises and from His sure mercies. It is not from the largeness of Jesus' gifts we are to form a judgment of His favor towards us, but from the largeness of the love of His heart towards us. Even among men, we do not form our opinions by what men *do*, so much as by what they mean. A wise and prudent father may dearly love his child, and yet be very sparing in his gifts. Nay, he may even withhold them from the greatness of his love, lest too much bounty might injure him. And so it is said, of our God and Father, that "He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence." We cannot, therefore, estimate His love by His gifts, since His withholding them may itself be the fruit of love, and the evidence of infinite and far-reaching wisdom. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, raiseth up one and pulleth down another, comforteth one and chasteneth another, maketh peace to flow through the heart of one like a river because he trusteth in Him, and sendeth another empty away, because he trusteth in himself and in his own graces, or because

he is looking for joy and not for holiness, for his own good rather than the Saviour's glory—but to all and every one He gives ground for exclaiming, "Blessed be the name of the Lord. Even so, Father, for such seemeth good in Thy sight. Thy will, not mine, be done. I will trust in the Lord, and not be afraid. He is my light and my life, and He will yet be the strength of my heart and my salvation. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places."

Let such, then, dear readers, be your views and expectations, in going to, and returning from, the Lord's Supper. Go to the feast with these gracious apprehensions and expectations. Behold the King at His table, and look for such blessings from His hand as He knoweth it best to bestow.

Blessing, and honor, and power, and glory, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb that was slain, for ever and ever! Surely our God is gracious in having instituted such a feast for the setting forth of His love. I have tasted, I do taste, that the Lord is gracious, and that His mercy endureth for ever. Oh! what a miracle of love is the whole purpose of God, concerning His church and people! Chosen of God to be holy; then fallen by sin, then redeemed by blood, yea, the blood of the Son of God; then regenerated by the Spirit, and now feasted upon the body and blood of Christ. And ere long to sit down in the kingdom of glory, to feast their ravished souls in the unceasing enjoyment of God and the Lamb for evermore. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!

Gracious Lord God! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! In the name of Thy dear and blessed Son, I pray for grace to present myself at thy mercy seat. It hath been proclaimed in Thy church, and to thy people, that my Lord is about to hold a feast at his table on the sacrifice of His own broken body and blood. Lord! may I be of the happy number? I would come

as a poor needy sinner. And I would pray my God, who spreads His table and invites His guests, to prepare my otherwise unprepared soul, both to accept the invitation, and to be found a welcome guest before Thee.

I look up to thee, O thou blessed and eternal Spirit! who art the alone quickener of dead souls, and the glorifier of Christ Jesus; that thou wouldst work in me, both to will and to do of thy good pleasure. Oh! give me such a deep view of sin, and with it such a deep view of the fullness, suitableness, and all sufficiency of redeeming grace in Christ, that while my soul feels, as it ought to feel, an abiding sense of my own total unworthiness before God, the view of Jesus and his finished salvation may comfort and encourage me. Bring me, Divine Spirit, to that fountain which is open for sin and uncleanness. Wash me, and make me white in the blood of the Lamb! Clothe me with the robe of Christ's spotless righteousness, so that when the King comes in to see the guests at His table, I may be found by Him clothed in his wedding garment, the righteousness of the saints, and have a gracious reception!

And oh! Thou Blessed Redeemer! Thou who art the Lord of the feast, and the whole substance of it! wilt Thou be graciously pleased to manifest thyself to me at thy table; and while Thou art visiting one and another of thy redeemed there with the smiles of Thy love, oh! for some sweet token to my poor soul also, given me by Thine own hand. Let me hear Thy voice; let me see Thy countenance: for sweet is Thy voice, and Thy countenance is comely!

Everlasting praise to my God and Father for taking me into this covenant of grace, and for having given me to his dear Son. Lord, accept me in him. Give me to know my adoption in him: and both here and for ever may my soul be found holy in him, and without blame before Thee in love. And may my soul be in such lively actings of faith at the table of thy dear Son, that I may enjoy all the blessings of thy covenant love in Jesus Christ. Glory be to Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, now and for ever.

Great Master of the feast! Precious Lord Jesus! by every great and glorious name, and by every tender and endearing name would my

soul call upon Thee, and welcome my Lord at His own table! Lord! I pray thee come in and see thy guests at thy table. Thou art Thyself all the feast. Thou art the Sacrifice, the Sacrificer, and the Altar of thine offering. For by that one offering of Thyself once offered, thou hast perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Behold, Lord! thy redeemed, thy children, thy people, here met at thine invitation to be fed by thy bounty, and to commemorate the sweet memorial of thy death. Lord! be thou with us in every part of the feast.

Surely, God our Father hath drawn me here, for Jesus himself hath said, that none can come unto Him except the Father, who hath sent Jesus, draw him. Surely, God the Spirit hath inclined my soul to come here; for it is He that hath put an hungering and thirsting in my soul after Jesus, and which none but Jesus himself can satisfy. And, surely, God the Son hath invited me here; for Jesus did promise that when He was lifted up He would draw all to Him! O precious testimonies of a precious covenant God in Christ. Here then, I am, come; and may the Lord give me a gracious welcome!

But, Lord, before I depart, let me drop one petition for Thy Zion, and that part of Thy church more especially with whom I am here partaking of Thy bounties. Lord, answer every cry of Thy children. Give out largely to the supply of their wants. Suffer none, no, not one of Thine, to go empty away, but let Thy poor, and Thy needy, give praise to Thy name. Surely, Jesus is constrained to bless His own. He will not hide Himself from His own flesh. If Thou, dearest Lord, wert to withhold Thy bounties, Thou wouldst not be more full. And if thou wert to give ever so largely, Thou canst not be straitened. Lord, pronounce a blessing, then, on every one, and let all Thy people praise Thee. God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us. Selah. That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee. O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy; for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and

God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us: and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.

What the Lord's Supper is, and what it Teaches.

From what has now been said, the true nature and design of the Lord's Supper, and of the benefits to be derived from it, must be apparent. It is to Christianity what the celebration of the Fourth of July is to our National Independence. It is an instituted public and stated observance, originated at the very beginning of Christianity, and constantly maintained by all Christians, in every part of the world, ever since. It is a phenomenon incapable of explanation, except by the admission of the great fundamental facts of Christianity. It is a monument more enduring than brass, or triumphal arches, or pyramids of stone. It is a *living* monument, whose sound has gone out into all the earth, so that there is no speech or language where its voice has not been heard. It is a pillar and ground for the truth; and as it has stood firm as a rock against all the assaults of hell ever

since Christ's coming, so will it remain firm and unassailable, lifting its head to the clouds, and covering with its ever widening base the whole earth, until Christ comes the second time to judge that world which He redeemed.

But, while the Lord's Supper is an irresistible demonstration of the truth of Christianity, it is the great cardinal doctrine of Christianity which this institution singles out and commemorates. It is the death of the Lord Jesus Christ it shows forth, as often as it is observed,—

> Christ and His cross is all its theme,
> The mystery that it speaks
> Is scandal in the Jews' esteem,
> And folly to the Greek.

But to them that believe, it is the power of God unto salvation. Jesus Christ and Him crucified is its glory. Christ our passover is here in lively representation slain for us. His body is here broken, and His blood shed, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. This great fundamental peculiarity of the gospel, is the truth of which this ordinance is a public, constant, and unchangeable proclamation. Jesus Christ is in this ordinance evidently

set forth among men crucified and slain, as the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the gospel, the glad tidings, the good spell, the only foundation laid in Zion, and the only way under heaven by which men can be saved.

Imbedded in the very bowels of Christianity and ascending up far above all heavens, this ordinance remains the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, pointing the wayfaring man though a fool, so plainly to Jesus Christ—and His blood and righteousness,—as the way of salvation, that amid all the fluctuations of human opinion—all the heresies that must arise—and all the errors of past ages which, during the centuries that are past, have lifted up their heads like raging waves of the sea against it, beaten back and broken, now lie waveless at its base—he need not err.

The Lord's Supper is, therefore, a testimony to Jesus—a permanent, stated, and immoveable ordinance in the Church, in order to show that salvation is based exclusively and altogether on the person, blood and righteousness of Christ as a divine Saviour,—a beacon on every rock and point of earth's dangerous shores, to direct the storm-tossed and buffeted mariner

safely to the haven of everlasting life—or, like the serpent lifted up in the wilderness, it is a signal uplifted high, to catch the expiring gaze of every dying sinner, and fix it in saving and healing faith upon Him who is here lifted up upon the cross, that whosoever believeth on Him may not perish but have everlasting life. It bears witness of Christ. It is a living prophet—the voice of one crying in the wilderness of human life, and in every street, and from every church—Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

Let this characteristic of the nature and design of the Lord's Supper be well considered. It gives to it a peculiar significance, a transcendent importance. It imparts to it "manifold wisdom." It is to the system of the gospel the heart-ordinance—the very central organ of vital power, activity, and nourishment, without which it dies and loses its distinctive nature. For, let it be remembered, that while the gospel receives, teaches, and authoritatively sanctions all the doctrines pertaining to God and man,—the body and the soul, time and eternity, God's power and providence, man's responsibility and subjection as a moral creature to God's moral

government,—while it affirms, confirms, and illustrates all these and many similar truths, nevertheless that new and transcendent element which, as has been said, overtops all others in its importance, and to bring which to light the gospel was revealed and the Lord's Supper instituted, most assuredly is the redemption of man by God in Christ; his Redemption from sin, in both its penalty and its power; his Justification before God through faith in Christ; his Sanctification through the truth by the Divine Spirit; the impartation to him as one with Christ of the life of God; and his fitness thereby for the Celestial realms. This whole stupendous work of redemption, embracing such various displays of Divine wisdom and grace, which makes the gospel to differ essentially from every other system. It is this which has always wrought most powerfully upon the hearts of men, to bring them to repentance. It is this which has attracted to itself the most intense affection of the Church through its whole history, and has shined upon Christians with most effulgent and animating light. And it is this, the striking away of which from the gospel at once reduces it to

a level little superior to that of the writings of Plato and Christian sages; which robs the gospel, in fact, of its characteristic glory, and makes its miracles needless, and its pretensions unintelligible.

The end aimed at in the gospel, and in the Lord's Supper also—so far as it regards man—is, therefore, the salvation of the soul, and that salvation is declared to be in Jesus Christ the Lord. You are a sinner. You are guilty. You are depraved. You are polluted. You are ignorant. You are helpless. You are undone. Jesus Christ is the only Saviour. His blood cleanseth from all sin. His righteousness cleanseth from all condemnation. His Spirit quickens the soul. His grace is sufficient for us. He is our life, our wisdom, our sanctification, our redemption, the hope set before us, our all in all. The word testifies of Him. Ministers preach Him. Sabbaths proclaim His finished work and His ascended power and glory, and righteousness. And the Lord's Supper shows what He must work in us, what He must be unto us and do for us, until made perfect in Christ Jesus.

It is Christ THE LORD, therefore, whose

death is here "shown forth." It is Christ not as dead, but as living—as having died and rose again, and ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things and reassume that glory which He had with the Father from before the foundation of the world. It is the mighty God—the everlasting Father who is here celebrated as the Prince of Peace, mighty and able to save to the uttermost. It is Emanuel—God with us—the great mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh, that as God incarnate He might thus purchase the church with His own blood; we here see unveiled and brought down to our familiar comprehension.

And as baptism, the only other sacrament of the church, is unto the Name and a consecration to the worship, of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost—the Triune God; so the Supper of the Lord, which opens sweet communion with Jesus at his table, brings with it, also, a heartfelt enjoyment of the favor, love, and personal communion through Jesus, with all the Persons of the GODHEAD. At the table of the Lord, therefore, we enter into a most blessed and soul-satisfying apprehension of redemption by Jesus, through the appointment

and covenant love of God the Father, and the quickening, renewing, and sealing grace of God the Holy Ghost. The blessed Spirit thus witnesses with our spirits, that we are the sons of God.

The Lord's Supper is thus an epitome of the gospel, compressing in one expressive service those leading facts, which constitute its great truths. It is a syllabus of what is more fully delivered in the gospels and epistles. It is an index, directing the inquirer to the most prominent and important subjects. It is a pictorial representation of the Gospel, bringing into the central foreground in order to give them lustre and effect, those objects to which all the other parts of the picture are subservient, and to which, as the grand result, they are however beautiful in themselves, only tributary.

Christ, then, is the end of all the means of grace, and the means toward the great end—the prize of our high calling. And to discern this truth in this sacrament—to understand, receive and heartily embrace it—and to be led in our helpless weakness to Christ,—having received Him, to walk in Him, to lean on Him, and to look to Him for grace and mercy according to our need—this is the great blessing

of the ordinance, without which none should be satisfied, and to which all others will be added according to His good pleasure.

Look, then, dear reader, to this ordinance for that which it is ordained to accomplish as its grand and glorious result. It is a schoolmaster to bring you to Christ. It is a gentle hand that would lead you to see Jesus. It is a glass in which you may see mirrored all the lineaments of His blessed countenance. It is a river of life, in which are reflected the beams of this Sun of Righteousness, and from which you may draw plentifully the water of life. This is the way along which Christ is passing, so that whether you are blind, or halt, or lame, or sick, or low in stature like Zaccheus so as to require to climb in order to attract His notice, you may still cry aloud, "Lord have mercy on me." The Lord's Supper is the Lord preaching to you, and saying, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." It is the Lord looking upon you, approaching you, coming very near to you, talking with you, that as a Prince and Saviour He may give you repentance and remission of sins, according to your need.

Let Christ, then,—Christ as a prophet,

priest, and King—Christ as a reprover, purifier, and preserver—Christ as a physician, a leader, and a ruler—Christ as a sovereign, almighty, and all-sufficient Redeemer, Lord and Master—as well as Christ a friend, a pacifier, and a tender, affectionate, and sympathizing High Priest—be that which you seek in coming to His table. Submit your soul to Him, and let Him do towards you as seemeth to Him good. Be not anxious. Let not your heart be troubled. In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, since it is through much tribulation we must all enter the kingdom of God. Be not disappointed if the way of the cross is your way to the crown, and a day of weary toil your preparation for a night of rest, and quietness, and peace. What matters it to the traveller who is hastening to home and loved ones, if the way is rough and thorny? And what need the Christian care what may be the nature of the way, so that he may but safely reach his home,

Where he shall bathe his weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across his peaceful breast.

If we would conquer, we must fight. If we would reach the prize, we must run. If we would reign with Christ, we must suffer also with Him. And if we would be glorified together with Him, we must be sanctified and made holy by Him. If we would ascend the holy hill of God, we must pass through the valley of humiliation. If we would rise still higher to heights of glory, we must overtop the hill Difficulty and the slough of Despond. And if ever we enter the gates of the city and the land of Beulah, it will be after enduring the cross in the town of Vanity, and after encountering many a hard struggle with giant Despair, and the dark phantom spectre in the valley of the shadow of death.

Let this, then, be the burden of your prayer and the sum and substance of your desires in coming to the Lord's Supper—

> That you may grow
> In faith, and love, and every grace;
> May more of His salvation know,
> And seek more earnestly his face.

Only let this blessing be made yours, and then, come what will, whether lights or shadows, smiles or frowns, chastening or consolation,

disappointment and distress, or delight and joy, you will feel assured that all things are gained, and that you are Christ's; and you will hear Christ saying, "It is I. I am with thee; be not afraid, I will not leave you comfortless, only believe."

Whatever trials I employ,
From self and pride do set you free,
And break the schemes of earthly joy,
That you mayest seek your all in me.

Then leaning on your beloved, and desiring light and life from Him, songs will be put into your mouth, and you can sweetly sing,—

Thus far the Lord has led me on,
And made His truth and mercy known,
My hopes and fears alternate rise,
And comforts mingle with my sighs.

Through this wide wilderness I roam,
Far distant from my blissful home;
Lord, let thy presence be my stay,
And guard me in this dangerous way.

Temptations every where annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy;
My earthly joys are from me torn,
And oft an absent God I mourn.

My soul with various tempests tossed,
Her hopes o'erturned, her projects crossed,
Sees every day new straits attend,
And wonders where the scene will end.

Is this, dear Lord, that thorny road,
Which leads us to the mount of God?
Are these the toils thy people know,
While in this wilderness below?

'Tis even so; thy faithful love
Doth all thy children's graces prove;
'Tis thus our pride and self must fall,
That Jesus may be All in all.

The honor and glory of Membership in Christ's Church, and how disciples should therefore live and act.

Consider, then, dear reader, your high calling—your glorious birthright—your unspeakable blessedness in being a fellow-citizen with the saints, a member of the household of God, an heir of God, a follower of the Lamb, a disciple of the Lord, a member of Christ's body, no longer a stranger and foreigner, or an enemy or a servant, but a friend of Him whose favor is life, and whose loving-kindness is better than life.

"This honor hath all the saints;" and it is

this glory which illustrates and adorns the most exalted personage of earth as much as the lowliest of its poor and unnoticed guest, that comes in poverty of spirit, if not in poverty of outward condition to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

At the coronation of his majesty George III., after the anointing was over in the Abbey, and the crown put upon his head with great shouting, the two archbishops came to hand him down from the throne to receive the sacrament. His majesty told them he would not go to the Lord's Supper, and partake of that ordinance with the crown upon his head; for he looked upon himself, when appearing before the King of Kings, in no other character than in that of an humble Christian. The bishops replied that, although there was no precedent for this, it should be complied with. Immediately he put off his crown, and laid it aside; he then required that the same should be done with respect to the queen. It was answered that her crown was pinned to her head, that it could not be easily taken off. To which the king replied, "Well, let it be reckoned a part of her dress, and in no other light." "When I saw

and heard this," says the narrator, "it warmed my heart towards him; and I could not help thinking, that there would be something good found about him towards the Lord God of Israel."

"Church fellowship," says Bunyan, "rightly managed, is the glory of all the world. No place, no community, no fellowship is adorned and bespangled with such beauties as is a church rightly knit together to their Head, and lovingly serving one another. Christians are like the several flowers in a garden, that have upon each of them the dew of heaven, which, being shaken by the wind, let fall their dew at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished and become nourishers of one another. Oh, how happy," he adds, "is he who is not only a visible but also an invisible saint. He shall never be blotted out of the book of God's eternal grace and mercy.

"This is the man with whom God is, in whom God works and walks,—a man, whose motion is governed and steered by the mighty hand of God and the effectual working of his power. *Here is a man!*

"This man, by the power of God's might,

which worketh in him, is able to cast a whole world behind him, with all the lusts and pleasures of it, and to charge through all the difficulties that men and devils can set against him. *Here is a man!*

"This man is travelling 'to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus.' *Here is a man!*

"This man can look upon death with comfort, can laugh at destruction when it cometh, and long to hear the sound of the last trump, and to see the Judge coming in the clouds of heaven. *Here is a man*, indeed!

"'The angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, and delivereth them.' This, therefore, he says, is a glorious privilege of the men 'that fear the Lord.' Alas! there are some of them so mean, that they are counted not worth taking notice of by the high ones of the world; but their betters do respect them. The angels of God count not themselves too good to attend on them, and camp about them to deliver them. This, then, is the man that

hath his angel to wait on him, even he that feareth the Lord."

Oh, how blind and besotted are the children of this world, who see in Christ no beauty and comeliness wherefore they should desire Him, although altogether lovely; and who see no glory in the Christian, though he is a prince in Israel, and has power with God; who see no glory in the Church, though it is the palace of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the joy of the whole earth, an eternal excellency, of which it is said, "Thy God is thy glory." Like Elijah's servants, they can see nothing but earth, earth; feel no desire but for man's favor, and no fear but of man's wrath. But when their eyes are unsealed, how do they behold the chariots of the Lord *and* the Lord transfigured, and the earth and all its glory obscured in the greater glory of Zion, which is now fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.

Oh, how do Christians then look as if their faces did shine, and they were the excellent ones of the earth, the friends and favorites of God. So it was when Bunyan listened to those poor women of Bedford, of whom he tells

us: "One day, the good providence of God called me to Bedford, to work at my calling; and in one of the streets of that town, I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door in the sun, talking about the things of God; and being now willing to hear their discourse, I drew near to hear what was said, for I was now a brisk talker myself in the matters of religion; but I may say, 'I heard, but I understood not,' for they were far above, out of my reach. Their talk was about a new birth, the work of God in their hearts, as also how they were convinced of their miserable state by nature. They talked how God had visited their souls with his love in the Lord Jesus, and with what words and promises they had been refreshed, comforted, and supported against the temptations of the devil; and methought they spake as if joy did make them speak; they spake with such pleasantness, that they were, to me, as if they had found a new world, as if they were people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbors."

With what earnest, laborious jealousy did this set Bunyan about seeking a participation

in their heavenly joy. "Oh," says he, "how I loved those words that spoke of a Christian's calling, as when the Lord said to one, 'Follow me;' and to another, 'Come after me?' Oh, thought I, that he would say so to me, too! How gladly would I run after him! I cannot now express with what longings and breathings in my soul I cried to Christ to call me. Thus I continued for a time, all in a flame to be converted to Jesus Christ. I also did see such glory in a converted state that I could not be contented without a share therein. Gold!—could it have been gotten for gold—what would I have given for it? Had I a whole world, it had all gone, ten thousand times over, that my soul might have been in a converted state.

"How lovely was every one in my eyes that I thought to be converted, whether man or woman! They shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of heaven about them. Oh! I saw the 'lot had fallen to them in pleasant places, and they had a goodly heritage.'

"While I thought," adds Bunyan, "of that blessed ordinance of Christ, which was his last supper with his disciples before his death, that

Scripture—'Do this in remembrance of me'—was made a very precious word to me; for by it the Lord did come down upon my conscience with the discovery of his death for my sins, and, as I then felt, did as if he plunged me in the virtue of the same. Were my soul in but such a good condition, and were I but sure of it, oh, how rich should I esteem myself, though blessed with but bread and water.

"About this time," he tells us, "the state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus, in a kind of vision, presented to me. I saw, as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought, also, betwixt me and them stood a wall, that did encompass about this mountain; now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding, if I could, that I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

"About this wall I bethought myself to go again and again—still praying as I went—to

see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At last, I saw as it were a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now, the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain—even until I was well-nigh beat out, by striving to get in; at last, with great sidling, my shoulders and my whole body got in; then I was exceedingly glad, went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted by the light and heat of their sun.

"Now this wall and mountain were thus made out to me: The mountain signified the church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of His merciful face on those that were therein; the wall, I thought, was the world, that did make separation between Christians and the world; and the gap that was in the wall, I thought, was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father; for Jesus said, in his reply to Thomas, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me'—'Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way

which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.'

"But forasmuch as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow that I could not but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest, and unless, also, they left that wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, and not for body and soul and sin."

Remember, then, dear reader, from what depths thou hast been raised, and to what height thou hast been exalted—what thou wert in thyself, and what thou art in Christ—the greatness of thy misery and danger and deserved damnation, and the greatness of salvation—the light afflictions which can possibly afflict you here, and the exceeding and eternal weight of glory that is treasured up for you in heaven—and live, and love, and act, and suffer, and work, and give, as becometh the children of a king, and the expectant heirs of a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

You will have many discouragements from within, from without, from the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Tempter will come upon you

with such suggestions as he did to Bunyan: "'You are very hot for mercy, but I will cool you. This frame shall not last always; many have been as hot as you are for a space, but I have quenched their zeal.' And with this, such-and-such who had fallen off would be set before my eyes. Then I would be afraid that I should do so too; but, thought I, I am glad this comes into my mind; well, I will watch, and take what care I can. 'Though you do,' said Satan, 'I would be too hard for you. I will cool you insensibly, by degrees, by little and little. What care I,' saith he, 'though I be some years in chilling thy heart, if I can do so at last!' These things brought me into great straits; for, as I at present could not find myself fit for present death, so I thought to live long would make me more unfit, for time would make me forget all, and wear even the remembrance of the evil of sin, the worth of heaven, and the need I had of the blood of Christ to wash me, both out of mind and out of thought; but I thank Jesus Christ that these things did not at present slack my crying, but did rather put me more upon it."

As God has created you worthy not only to

believe in His Son, but also to confess Him before the world, and to be a witness for Him, perhaps a standard-bearer, a teacher of babes, a wife, a mother, a father, a Sabbath-school teacher, a co-worker with all that are zealous in every good work—watch and be saved. Wear His name on your foreheads. Bend His word as a necklace about your neck. Let your feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, and being thus clothed in the whole panoply of God, fight manfully the good fight of faith. Fight not uncertainly, as one that beateth the air. When weak, look for strength to Jesus. When fallen, arise, and Christ will give power to the faint, and thou shalt be made a conqueror, and more than conqueror, through Him that hath loved you.

"You cannot," to use once more the words of Bunyan, "be there where no eyes are upon you; you are a spectacle to God, angels, and men; and being exalted to the profession of Christianity, and also to the communion of God and saints, you can neither stand nor fall by yourself, but the name and cause and people of God shall, in some sense, stand and fall with

you; yea, let us have joy in thee, brother; refresh our spirits in the Lord. We have confidence in thee, that thou wilt be circumspect to the adorning of the doctrine of God our Saviour.

"Do not flatter yourself with a position among the sons of God unless you live like His sons. When we see a king's son playing with a beggar, this is unbecoming; so if you really be the King's children, live like the King's children; if ye be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above and not on things below. When you come together, talk of what your Father promises you. You should all love your Father's will, and be content and pleased with the exercises you meet with in the world; if you are the children of God, live together lovingly; if the world quarrel with you, it is no matter, but it is sad if you quarrel together: if this be among you, it is the sign of ill-breeding: it is according to no rules that you have in the Word of God. Dost thou see a soul that has the image of God in him? Save him, love him: say, 'This man and I must go to heaven one day.' Save one another; do good for one another: if any wrong you, pray to God to right you, and love the brotherhood.

"'Remember, man, if the grace of God hath taken hold of thy soul, thou art a man of another world, and, indeed, a subject of another and more noble kingdom—the kingdom of God—which is the kingdom of the gospel, of faith, of grace, of righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven hereafter. In those things thou shouldst exercise thyself, not making heavenly things, which God hath bestowed upon thee, stoop to things that are of the world; but rather here beat down the body, hoist up thy mind to the things that are above, and practically hold forth before all the world that blessed word of life.

"I doubt the faith of many," he declares, "and fear that it will prove no better than the faith of devils in the day of the Lord; for it is without life and soul to that which is good. For where is the man which walketh with the cross on his shoulders? Where is the man zealous of moral holiness? For those things, indeed, which have nothing of the cross of the purse, or the cross of the belly, or the cross of the back, or the cross of the vanity of household affairs —I find many busy sticklers; but self-denial, charity, purity in life and conversation are

almost turned quite out of doors among professors. But, man of God, do thou be singular! Singularity in godliness, if it be in godliness, no man should be ashamed of. Holiness is a rare thing now in the world.

"The design of this exhortation," he says, "was, and is, that naming the name of Christ should be accompanied with such a life of holiness as shall put additional lustre upon that name whenever it is named in a religious way." Such a lustre he himself determined to shed upon the name of Christ. "For my part," he says, "I had rather be a pattern and example of piety, rather my life should be instructing to the saints and condemning to the world, with Noah and Lot, than hazard myself among the multitude of the drossy. I know that many professors will fall short of eternal life; and my judgment tells me they will be of the slovenly sort that so do; and for my part I had rather run with the foremost and win the prize, than come behind and lose my labor. Not that works do save us; but faith which layeth hold of Christ's righteousness for justification sanctifieth the heart, and makes men desirous to live in this world to the glory of that Christ who died to save us from death.

"'Tis said of Hananiah, 'He feared God above many.' God continue of joy of thee, brother. Our hope of thee is steadfast through grace: trusting in the Lord that he that hath begun the good work in thee, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is a strange sight to behold those that did feed delicately to be desolate in the street, or they that were brought up in scarlet to embrace dunghills. We speak not these things to shame them, but as, our beloved brother, to warn thee. Oh, Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust; watch and be sober. And if thou be inclined to sleep, let that of Delilah arouse thee —'The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!'

"Grace be upon thee. The Lord is at hand. Behold, the Judge stands at the door. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

Are you a communicant?

Such was the question addressed, as the narrator tells us, to one who had for six years professed to be a follower of Him who said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." For months had she been mingling with the worldly and

the gay; and in the excitement of her daily life, she had forgotten that the vows of God were upon her, that she had been "bought with a price," even the blood of God's dear Son. She had indeed gone with the multitude to the house of prayer, but *how* had she listened to the truths there proclaimed? She had gone on with the world as if she were indeed of it, as if this were the end of her being.

One Sabbath morning, upon being asked by one of her gay companions to accompany him to hear some distinguished preacher, she declined, saying, that it was communion Sabbath in her church, and she must be there. '*Are* YOU *a communicant?*' was the short but cutting reply. Few and simple were the words, and perhaps forgotten as soon as spoken by him who uttered them, but they found their way to the young wanderer's heart. Go where she would, engage in what scenes of folly she might, this startling question would ring through her soul; and as she answered, "Yes, I am a communicant," that other mightier question would force itself upon her, "Am I a *Christian?*"

For six years she had called herself the friend of Jesus, and now she must go back

through all those years. She must recall the hour when, in the agony of an awakened and convicted spirit, she cried to God for mercy, and he heard her cry, and whispered, 'Go in peace; thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee.' Then the trembling hope, the holy fear, the new tides of joy which filled her heart, as bowing in penitential prayer she gave herself away to Him; then the day on which she confessed Christ before the world, the resolves she formed that she would live only for the glory of God, and the good of her fellow-creatures; the happy months which followed of sweet communion with her Saviour, the zeal with which she engaged in His service—*all*, *all* came back to her. She recalled with bitterness the first time that she deserted the place of prayer for some scene of gayety and folly, and all those years of wandering in which she had indeed been a member of the visible church, but, alas, had given little evidence that she loved Him whose death she commemorated. Oh, what a record had gone up against her—what scores of wasted opportunities and despised privileges—what reproach had she brought upon the name and cause of religion!

Again she bowed in agony of spirit as she had years before, and asked forgiveness of Him whom she had so deeply wronged. Again did those accents of mercy fall on her ear, 'Go in peace; thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee;' and from that audience she went forth strong in *His* strength. He only, the great Searcher of hearts, witnessed the anguish of his repentant child. He only knew the peace and joy which she experienced; but the world saw the *fruit* of all this in her humble and consistent life, her untiring efforts to do what in her lay for the glory of her beloved Master. Now there is no need to ask, 'Are you a communicant?' for her daily walk shows that her "life is hid with Christ in God."*

Remember therefore Peter, and be not high-minded, but fear. Remember Lot's wife, and look not back. Remember Demas, and beware lest the love of this present world lead thee to forsake Christ and His disciples. Remember Judas, and take heed and beware of covetousness, which is that idolatry, by whose witchery the love of many waxeth cold. Remember Simon Magus, and fear lest, having

* Gospel Messenger.

been numbered with the people of God, your heart should not be right, and you should have neither part nor lot in the matter. Remember the disciples of Jesus, who becoming offended because of His doctrine of the cross, went away, and walked no more with Him. Remember all those who, having put their hand to the gospel plough, have become weary, sat down and taken their ease, and fallen asleep in Zion. Remember Lot, and Noah, and beware of that syren who lurks in the juicy grape, and in the wine when it is red, to lure men away from sense and reason, and modesty and shame. Remember Samson, who gave the strength of the Lord to Delilah, lest you also lying on the lap of indolent self-indulgent gratification, yield thy heart to sin, betray the secret of the Lord which is with them that fear Him, and drown thyself in perdition and many hurtful snares. Remember Saul, lest by indulging in a selfish, envious and jealous disposition you provoke God to depart from you. Remember David, and make a covenant even with your eyes as well as your lips, lest sin, being conceived, brings forth sin, and when it is finished terminates in death itself. It is not necessary,

in order to sin, to have it introduced from without. It is already within you. You were conceived in sin, and born, and brought forth in iniquity, and are prone to evil as the sparks to fly upwards. Your heart is corrupt and full of poisonous malaria which only require the presence of the candle to explode. Yea, a single spark will kindle in it an unquenchable flame. Yea, as in the smooth pond or the quiet sea in which are mirrored in apparent beauty all the glory of the heavens, it only requires a breath of temptation to destroy the celestial landscape, and make it cast forth mire and dirt, so is it with your heart. Remember how the way to Zion is strewn with the bones of unhappy travellers who, turning aside from the king's highway—the straight and narrow road—have fallen a prey to that roaring lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Remember what you were, what you are, where you are, where you are going, what is your first great business here, and how soon the night cometh, and your Master's voice shall be heard calling you to give account of your stewardship. Remember that your soul and this life, and this present world, constitute your field

where you are to work the work of God—even your everlasting salvation. Remember that the produce of this field is to be your future portion and inheritance, and that he that soweth to the flesh—to self—shall of the flesh reap corruption; that he that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; that he that soweth the wind of a vain, indolent and frivolous life, shall reap the whirlwind; while on the other hand, he that soweth plentifully for the Lord and his cause, shall reap abundantly in the life everlasting.

The work to be done, and the way to do it.

What a work, then, my dear reader, have you to accomplish! a painstaking and painful work; a self-denying work; a convincing, awakening and converting work; a regenerating, sanctifying and purifying work; a heart-work as well as a head-work; a work in the understanding, the affections and the will; a work in the body, in mortifying, crucifying and keeping it under, as well as in the soul; an out-door as well as an in-door work; a work at home, in the counting-house, in the

lanes and by-ways, as well as in the sanctuary; a work for the poor, the miserable, the blind, the guilty, the naked, the homeless, the fatherless, for the young, and the middle-aged and the old, for all men, as you have opportunity, as well as for your own salvation; a life work and a love work, terminating only in the rest of the grave, and in that final rest which remaineth beyond the grave; and a work sustained by that love which is stronger than death, equal to all trials, and which many waters of affliction, disappointment, and trouble cannot quench.

Oh what a work, my reader, is there before you!—a high and holy calling—a glorious race—a warfare in which you are made a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men.

Live, then, as in God's sight, and in the sight of death, judgment, heaven and hell. Live and act knowing that you stand or fall alone *by* yourself, though not *for* yourself. Let no man, therefore, hinder you in your work.

Take a few examples of your work, and how to do it. You are a wife, a husband, a child; and they who are dear to you, and to whom perhaps you are subject in the Lord, care for

none of these things, and count the cross a scandal. Be it so. You are put to the proof. You have here a test or experiment of your sincerity and devotion. Two masters claim your allegiance and your obedience. Shall you obey and please man or God? Shall you obey husband and parents, and please children and friends in all things not sinful or forbidden? This God requires. This is the way of peace and power, and the way to do them good. But not one hairbreadth beyond this are you at liberty to go. For He that loveth father or mother, or children, more than Christ is not worthy of Him, and true love to them is faithful and unfaltering obedience to Christ. Thus, and thus only, can you hope to win them to Christ, and to save your own soul. Of this I could give you many striking examples, both as it regards the power of children and wives. Take one:

A few years since, says a correspondent of the New York Evangelist, during a powerful revival in New England, the Holy Spirit exerted its mighty influence upon a family circle consisting of a father, a mother, and five most interesting children. The mother and her five

children were hopefully converted. The father, who was naturally one of the most amiable, retiring, modest men with whom I ever was acquainted, aided his family in attending the numerous meetings, and was not unfrequently seen bowed down and trembling under the power of the truth. The conversion of his wife and children in rapid succession, were like so many earthquake shocks to the foundations on which his false hopes rested. But neither the affecting scenes of their distress, nor the ecstasies of their subsequent joy could melt his heart into contrition. He now felt that he was groping in a *dark path*, and in wretched loneliness. He who should have been the leader of a pious household, was left far behind, a subject of prayer, and an occasion of grief to the circle around him. Thus he remained for weeks. Ere long preparations were made for gathering in the fruits of the revival into the church, and a day appointed for the examination of the candidates. The mother and her five children, and some sixty others, came before the church, and were propounded for admission into its pale. As the day of admission drew near, the father, who had watched their movements with much

concern, expressed a regret to his wife that they should make a profession at present, and requested that they should wait for him. The mother, deeply moved, solicited the advice of the pastor and other friends; but, after due deliberation, it was concluded that the path of their duty was plain, and that they were bound to follow Christ. With unusual decision and firmness they resolved to do so. As soon as he knew their decision, he became more earnest in his remonstrances, and used every possible argument, especially with the mother, to dissuade her from her purpose, but in vain. He soon changed his tone of entreaty into one of fearful threatening, warning his wife if she had any affection for him, any regard for the peace of the family, to desist from her purpose, and *wait* for him. 'No,' said the martyr-like woman, 'I love you most tenderly, but I love Christ more. I have waited for you for more than twenty years, and now I shall do my duty, and as to the consequences I will leave them to God.' At the close of this interview, which took place on a Saturday evening, he took his hat, and uttering some threats, left the house, as if never to return. It was a painful sight to

mother and children. Might he not become the victim of lasting mania, or in his rage and disappointment suddenly destroy himself? As it afterwards appeared, he retired to his barn, threw himself on the hay-mow, it being midsummer, and there rolled and struggled like a wild beast in a net. An awful warfare was waging between an awakened conscience and a desperately rebellious heart. He could not, would not submit. Sabbath morning came—the family, with trembling anxiety for the absent father, prepared to go to the house of God; but just before the hour of service, his feelings drove him from his hiding-place. He was safe, but still unhumbled. He again inquired of his wife if she remained fixed in her purpose, and finding that she did, he left the house with dreadful signs of rebellion, throwing out some intimations that he never should return—that fearful consequences might be anticipated. He was soon out of sight, but not out of mind. The family departed; and the father, finding his threat unavailing, returned to the house, prepared his person with dispatch, and was soon seen in the gallery in a situation favorable for witnessing the ceremony he had op-

posed so vainly. And when the ceremony of reception took place, and the father looked down and saw his wife and five children, with the rest, kneel around the altar, he burst into tears, and his agitation was great. The step was taken, and could not be retraced. On retiring from the house he felt that he was indeed, ALONE. He began to come to himself—to review the dreadful rebellion of his heart, which recent events had brought to light. His heart began to break; and in a few hours his soul was made to rejoice in that Saviour whom he had so recently persecuted. He now felt deeply thankful that his wife had taken so decided a course; and he considered her uniting with the Church, the means, in God's hands, of leading him to repentance.

Yes, dear reader, be faithful to Christ, to duty, and to what pertains to your own salvation, and God will be with you, to bless you, and to make you a blessing to your house, your home, your kindred, and your friends. But if you allow the love of man, or the fear of man, or the love of this present world, to bring a snare upon you, and lead you to hesitate, to temporize, and to do evil that good may come, it may be to your everlasting regret.

You may be a widow with children growing up around you; and surrounded as they will be by gay and thoughtless companions, they may wish to be like them, and to follow a multitude in living according to the lusts of the eye and the pride of life, if not the lusts of the flesh. What are you to do? I will tell you. I well remember, says one, when about nine years of age, returning from school one day, with a request to my mother that I might attend a children's ball, which was to take place the next evening. One or two had been held before, at which most of my companions were present; my younger sister and I had, however, received no invitation, as it was well understood that our mother was "very strict," and probably would not permit us to attend. But on this occasion a note was handed us, as we were returning from school, requesting our company for the next evening; and as we entered the parlor where our mother was sitting, our little hearts swelled with desires to which they had, until then, been strangers. We asked her permission to attend, which she gently, but firmly denied, giving us at the same time, some of her most important reasons for so doing. We felt the propriety of her objections, and in fact

had little inclination to enter into an amusement with which we were wholly unacquainted; but the dread of the sneer, and ridicule of our companions, and their remarks upon the unnecessary *strictness* of our dear parents, overcame every other feeling; and we begged that we might go at least once, in order to show them that she was more indulgent than they supposed. I shall never forget the tone of seriousness my mother assumed as she represented to us the responsibility incurred by Christian parents, in giving up their children to God. "You, my dear children," said she, "are consecrated children. Your parents have covenanted with God to train you up for his service. How can I, without a fearful violation of that covenant, permit you to enter a place where every thing you see and hear will be calculated to divert your minds from serious things. Would not God be justly angry with me, and could I expect His blessing in my endeavors to train you up for Him? Now which do you prefer, that I should displease God, or your companions?" This was enough. We were entirely satisfied, and were able to meet our companions the next day without shame or fear; indeed,

shall I say it, we felt a secret pride in the integrity of our dear mother's principles. Though afterward invited on one or two other occasions, we felt not the slightest inclination to accept. The question was settled, and settled forever. And how often, since we reached a mature age have we looked back to that period with indescribable interest, and with fervent gratitude to our parent for the firmness and wisdom she manifested. How much inconvenience and expostulation did she thus avoid, and from how many temptations and conflicts secure our youthful years. Much of the indifference with which we have ever regarded amusements of this kind, even since the formation of our own principles, may doubtless be traced to the impression thus early made upon our minds. And might not every parent by a similar course, throw the same safeguard around the future welfare of her children?—Surely *such children* will ever have cause to bless the honored name of mother!

Or it may be that you are anxious about your own soul, and that you have made up your mind to join the Church and become an open and professing disciple of the Lord Jesus.

There are, however, many things pressing upon your time and attention, and demanding immediate consideration. Shall you wait—postpone—put off till a convenient season? God forbid. Listen to the following testimony, and learn the devices of Satan.

Thirty-four years ago, says Mr. W., of R. I., I thought God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned my sins. My wife and I thought it our duty to follow Christ, and unite with the people of God. The day arrived on which we were to relate our experience to the Church, with a view to becoming members. We were nearly prepared to leave home, when a gentleman called and wished to transact some business with me. I told my wife to go on—I would be along soon. She went, related her experience, was baptized, and lived and died in the bosom of the Church. But I was detained longer than I expected to be, and found, when ready to go, that it was *too late.* The next meeting for the purpose I was again hindered by yielding to worldly business; and by the third meeting, I had little inclination to go, and doubted whether I was a Christian. Since then you have heard me profane the name of

God, and seen me neglect the house of His worship. But there has never been a single night that I have not, when laying my head upon the pillow, reflected upon the time of my conviction, and endured bitter remorse in view of my disobedience. But the *feeling* that I had on *that afternoon* has never returned. If I walk, I must go in the dark. I am now about fourscore years old; and had I the world, I would give it for a return of that impressive sense of my obligation to God, which should lead me to do the long neglected duty. Oh, my friends, as you value your soul's interest, let no earthly consideration prevent the immediate discharge of duty.

That you may grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God, live then, dear reader, for others, for your family, for your Church, for the salvation of souls. Would you be in health, you must be active; and would you have your soul prosper and be in health, you must go into Christ's vineyard and work. This is the way, and the only way, to keep the life-blood of piety circulating freely in your veins, to warm, nourish, and enliven your soul. Feed, then, the lambs around you. Take care

of the young. Go into the Sabbath school. Visit the poor, and the ignorant, and the careless around you, them that are in prison, and those who are lame, and pray, pray earnestly for grace, for the spirit of wisdom and power, and of a sound mind, that you may turn many to righteousness, who shall shine as stars in the firmament of heaven. Oh, be in earnest. Realize the awful danger in which these souls are lying, and that inevitable destruction towards which they are rushing with such headlong impetuosity. And while you weep and mourn with those who weep and mourn, while you

> Weep for the death-pangs of the heart,
> Ere being from the bosom part,

weep, oh weep still more bitterly for

> That death whose pang
> Outlasts the fleeting breath!
> Oh, what eternal horrors hang
> Around the second death.

The Lord's Supper often a converting ordinance.

You have, then, my dear reader, living around you, an impenitent brother or sister, father or

mother, friends and relatives, companions or acquaintances. Live for them. Love them. Pity them. Order your conversation and conduct so as best to win upon them and bring them to Christ. Induce them to read, and put suitable works into their hands. Persuade them to go with you to the house of God, not only on the Sabbath but also during the week. Hide not yourself from them. Tell them what God has done for your soul. Be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in you, and make it evident that your heart's desire for them is that they may be saved. In addition to the means suggested, induce them also to attend upon the communion Sabbath, and to remain and witness the solemn service. It is good for them to be there. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace—a means both for imparting and for increasing grace. It is a convincing and converting ordinance, as well as a comforting and sustaining ordinance. It is intended for sinners as well as for saints, for unbelievers as well as believers, for those who do not, and for those who ought not to communicate, as well as for those who do. It is, we have seen, a demonstration of the truth of

Christianity, and a preaching of the essential doctrines of Christianity. It brings into actual and appalling reality man's depravity, guilt, condemnation and danger—the certainty and fearfulness of a coming judgment—the terrible fact that surely there is a distinction between the righteous and the wicked, an impassable gulf, which only the blood of Christ can fill up, and the cross of Christ bridge over, and that except a man be born again, redeemed, and justified, there will be an eternal separation between him and Christ, between him and heaven, between him and Christians, just as surely as there is such a separation in the scene before him when, as in a rehearsal of the coming judgment, he sees the sheep gathered together and the goats left behind. And when, therefore, "there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, (and who may learn by seeing what is presented so impressively before him what he could not by the hearing of the ear,) he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth."

So it was in the Apostles' days; for "they," we are told, "continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart; praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the Apostles."

And so it has ever been in the history of the Church. The Lord's Supper is the Lord's power. It is His rod of iron—a fan in His hands—the trumpet of doom, calling sinners to judgment, and saints to salvation. It is a day of the right hand of His power, when the Lord makes bare His arm, wields his glittering sword, and commands guilty rebels to kiss the Son lest He be angry, and they perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little. In other days, and in other lands, at the present time, these seasons of communion have been found to be the great days of the feast, when Christ stands and cries aloud, "If any man

thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden yot your hearts; for behold now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation. Oh, that thou wouldst know, even in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace ere they are forever hidden from thine eyes. How shall ye escape if you neglect so great salvation. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."

Yes! many have been the occasions when on the mountain and the moorland, in the deep glen and the rocky defile, in dens and caves of the earth, in the catacombs of Rome, and in

the sanctuaries of God, the communion season has been a Pentecostal scene, a Valley of Bochim, a place where tears and sobs, and the groanings of suppressed conviction have mingled with the herald's voice of thunder, and the notes of solemn praise, and when a whole assembly have been shaken as the heart of one man, by the irresistible power of the Divine Spirit moving over them as He did over the chaotic mass, or as the wind bows beneath it the field of corn, or as the tempest subdues by its might the cedars of Lebanon and the trees of the forest.

Such was that season in the ministry of the illustrious Calvin, to which we have referred, and that other occasion, when, for the last time, he was carried, emaciated and nigh unto death, to the church, and in the presence of assembled multitudes received the sacrament at the hands of Beza with such expressions of joy in his countenance, and such awful stillness and weeping around him, as made it to all present none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven.

Such also was that occasion in the history of the Church of Scotland, when the youthful

preacher, Livingston, after going away to avoid preaching, and being, like Jonah, driven back to his post of duty by a secret constraining influence, the audience, and even the preacher himself, were affected with such a deep overpowering influence as to melt their hearts, subdue their wills, dissipate inveterate prejudices, awaken the careless and indifferent, produce conviction in the most hardened, bow down the most proud, and haughty, and bold, and to impart a spiritual knowledge of divine things to the hearts of Christians to which they had been hitherto strangers. "It was known," says Fleming, "as I can speak on sure ground, that nearly five hundred had at that time a discernible change wrought in them, of whom most proved lively Christians afterwards. It was a sowing of seed through Clydesdale, so that many of the most eminent Christians of that country could date either their conversion or some remarkable confirmation of their hopes from that day."

And while such cases of remarkable revivals in connection with the administration of the Lord's Supper are, unhappily—and to the Church's condemnation—rare, there are not

wanting continual evidence that this ordinance is the power of God unto conviction, conversion, and salvation to many souls.

About thirty years ago, this ordinance was dispensed at Bermuda, in the Presbyterian Church. A stranger from America was present. He had been residing for some time on the island. He came to the island a gay, thoughtless young man. One evening, in private, it occurred to him, in what must such a life issue? The thought took deep hold of his mind, and excited the utmost anxiety. His companions were gay like himself, and he knew no others. He became sick of his former life, but found none to direct him. He secluded himself, and was completely miserable. In various mortifications he expected relief; his severities were excessive; he was emaciated, and his life was in danger. He would have communicated his distress to those who could give him counsel; but where were such? O where? They were unknown to him. He attended worship at the time and place mentioned, and the solemnity was the most impressive I have ever witnessed. The remembrance at this moment is refreshing. The elements had

been consecrated and were in the hands of the communicants. All was still. Not a breath could be heard. It was like the silence mentioned in the book of Revelation, for half an hour. At this time some interesting scenes of Providence were disclosed, and all felt that they had a deep concern in the death of Christ. A voice broke the silence; it was an unknown voice, "*Christ, have mercy upon me!*" It was the voice of the stranger. All again was still as death, the solemnity of the assembly was increased, and their feelings too deep for utterance. The assembly breaking up, some retired rejoicing in the Redeemer, others deeply sensible that they stood in need of a Saviour. The stranger assured me that he was not aware of what he said, his mind was so fully engaged. When he was better instructed concerning the *person*, *character* and *office* of Christ, he saw a rock upon which he could build, and building thereon, he found rest to his soul. He became a zealous and an exemplary Christian. Returning to America, he took orders in the Episcopal Church, and has labored for many years in the vineyard, with acceptance and success.

Some years ago, a lady far advanced in life,

attended in Alexandria, when the ordinance of the Supper was dispensed in the Presbyterian Church. She had for a long time been in regular communion with a Christian Church. For the first time she was present when this ordinance was observed by Presbyterians. She was disposed to participate, and her desire was not refused. After the service of the first table, when the rest repaired to their pews, she remained, absorbed in thought. Reminded that others were ready to come forward, she observed, "I am so happy I could die here." Redeeming love occupied her mind. She had a foretaste of heaven, and as it proved this was the last service of the kind in which she participated, for soon, through decay of nature, she slept the sleep of death.

I mention but one instance more from among many others. A young person, who was just entering upon domestic life, with every prospect of many days, was so interested in the services introductory to the solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper, that she was constrained to give herself to the Lord, and in due season to become a communicant. The comfort she then was enabled to feel, dear reader, support-

ed her during a severe sickness, which soon after withered her bloom, and laid her low. This service she often mentioned, as the commencement of a new life, which we have reason to believe is now matured in heaven.

It is true, as may be objected to this view of the Lord's Supper, that it implies faith and spiritual life in him who rightly and profitably partakes of it; and that to all others it is like food to a dead or diseased body, which can neither eat nor digest it. To administer therefore, the Lord's Supper knowingly to such, would be like giving the children's bread to dogs, or man's food to brutes, or angel's food to men. Grant it. And yet so also is it with all the services of the sanctuary, all the means of grace, with prayer and praise, and all acceptable and profitable worship. These are all spiritual, adapted to spiritual natures, require spiritual motives and desires in them that profit thereby. God, who is a Spirit, can be worshipped aright in any of these ways, only in spirit and in truth; and he that cometh unto God to offer reasonable and acceptable service, must believe that He is, and seek Him with His whole heart. But it is, nevertheless, the duty of sinners to

pray, to praise, to worship and to seek God. And it is in so doing they are made to feel their sinfulness, ungodliness, and unbelief, and to seek and find that Divine Spirit, who alone can work in them to will, and feel, and worship aright, and who is the only companion and guide who can spiritually prepare our hearts for the ordinances and the altar of God.

If, therefore, all the other means of grace and services of the sanctuary are employed by God the Spirit, to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come, and if all this is accomplished by taking the truths pertaining to Christ, and showing them in realizing power and attractiveness to the unsealed vision of the sinner, how much more may we expect this to be the case when Christ is so evidently set before them, and gloriously exalted in His own Supper. And when sinners stand by, as did the Roman soldiers, and behold the spotless Lamb of God agonizing for their redemption in the throes of a cruel and perfidious crucifixion, may it not be expected that their hearts will be pricked with remorse, and they be led to cry out, "Truly this was the Son of God." "God be merciful to

me, a sinner." "Remember me, O Christ, in Thy death, Thy life, Thy rising again from the dead, and when Thou comest into Thy kingdom of glory."

Merciful Saviour, grant that whensoever and wheresoever Thou art lifted up in this holy Sacrament, Thou mayest by Thy almighty power and grace, draw the repentant hearts of ungodly sinners unto Thyself!

Induce, then, I say, dear reader, your impenitent friends to come with you to this ordinance, and to expect a blessing for themselves. For while it is true that professed believers only can properly communicate, an actual blessing may be communicated to them.

The Lord's Supper adapted to do good to Children.

Suffer also little children to come unto this ordinance, and forbid them not; for even as "of such is the kingdom of God," so on their young and tender hearts may this solemn service be made to come down like rain on the mown grass, to renew them unto God, and to cause them to bring forth and bud and blossom as the rose. Of the truth of this fact I

could produce instances from my own experience; and there are, blessed be God, at this moment in my own spiritual vineyard, some fragrant flowers blooming in youthful loveliness and beauty, and giving hopeful evidence of piety, whose tender minds were led to consecrate themselves to Christ, while sitting as silent worshippers during the communion services. Under the vivifying beams shining from this heavenly ordinance the good seed has been quickened in their hearts, and has come forth, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.

The Lord's Supper is therefore the children's ordinance as well as of those who have attained the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus. It is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom. To them pertaineth the promise and provision of His house; and out of their mouths He can perfect praise and put to shame the unbelief of those who are the wise of this world. They are dear to Jesus, the good Shepherd, who loves to hear their hosannas, to carry them in His arms, and to lead them gently beside the still waters, and along the green pastures of His own heavenly fold. And when He

comes among His flock to feed and comfort them, we may be sure He will not overlook the tender lambs. Oh, no! He will look upon them with an eye of peculiar pity, and speak to them in the still small voice of His all-subduing mercy. "About the eighth year of my age," says the celebrated John Brown, of Haddington, "I pushed with the crowd into the church at Abernethy on a Sacrament Sabbath. There I heard the minister speak much in commendation of Christ. This in a sweet and delightful manner captivated my young affections, and has since made me think that children should never be kept out of church on such occasions."

As to the proper time when children should be admitted into the Church, much wisdom is to be exercised, and no general rule can be laid down. The individual character, knowledge, experience, maturity of purpose, and other circumstances of each particular child must determine. But when able to discern the Lord's body, to give a reason of the hope that is in them, and to show by a good conversation their faith, and love, and devotion to the Saviour, let them, being first proved, and when no longer novices, "make a good confession before

many witnesses," and consecrate their strength and their unfolding character to the Lord. Being thus in the plastic age of undeveloped manhood, "delivered over," like molten gold, to the "form," *or mould*, "of doctrine" constructed by Infinite Wisdom, they will come forth into the busy world bearing about with them the image and superscription of their sovereign "Lord and God," and as epistles of Christ, written by the Holy Ghost, be seen and read of all men, to the praise and glory of Him whose "workmanship they are." Planted in the early spring of life, in the house and garden of the Lord, they will become fat and flourishing in the courts of our God, and still bring forth fruit even unto old age, to show that the Lord is upright, and that He withholdeth no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

The ability of young persons fully to discern the Lord's body, and the way of salvation through Him, is strikingly illustrated in the following facts:

One Sunday morning, during the reign of James II. of England, as a captain of a party of soldiers went out to "hunt down the Pro-

testants," as they used to say, they met a young woman, a servant-maid, running along the road, early in the morning, without either shoes or stockings. The captain of the band asked her where she was going so early in the morning, and what business it was that made her run so fast. She told him that she had learned that her elder brother was dead, and she was going to receive her share of the riches he had left to her, as well as to her other brothers and sisters, and she was afraid she should be too late. The captain was so well pleased with her answer that he gave her half a crown to buy a pair of shoes, and also wished her success; but if he had known what she really meant, (for she was on her way to take the Lord's Supper,) he would most likely have kept her from going that day to the place where she hoped to get true riches—more of the grace of God; a treasure indeed, for, "grace in the heart is glory begun."

Oh yes, both grace and glory have been left to the Christian in the New Testament, sealed with Christ's blood, and yet few so well know where to find his will, and how to read it, as did a little Irish boy, who, one day going to

school with a Bible under his arm, was met by a priest, who asked him what book he had there.

"It is a will, sir," said the boy.

"What will?" asked the priest.

"The last will and testament that Jesus Christ left to me, and to all who wish to claim a title to the property therein left," said the boy.

"What did Christ leave you in that will?"

"A kingdom, sir."

"Where does that kingdom lie?"

"It is the kingdom of heaven, sir."

"And do you expect to reign as a king there?"

"Yes, sir, as a joint heir with Christ."

"And will not every person get there as well as you?"

"No, sir; none can get there but those that claim their title to that kingdom upon the ground of the will."

The priest who spoke to the boy was one who daily read the Bible himself, and wished children to go to school where it is read, which most of the priests oppose. He was so much pleased with the boy's answer, that he said:

"Indeed, you are a good little boy; take care of that Book in which God gives you such precious promises; believe what he has said, and you will be happy here and hereafter."

Thus may children make from experience the language of Sir William Jones their own, and in old age testify:—

> Before thy mystic altar, heavenly truth,
> I kneel in manhood, as I knelt in youth:
> Thus let me kneel, till this dull form decay,
> And life's last shade be brightened by thy ray;
> Then shall my soul, now lost in clouds below,
> Soar without bound, without consuming glow.

A Western writer says that he is acquainted with three ladies, now in mature life and adorning their Christian profession, one of whom was but *eight* and the other two only *seven* years old at the time of their admission into the communion of the Church. These cases are perhaps extreme, but not wholly exceptional. There are enough on record like them to stimulate the zeal and rebuke the unbelief of parents and pastors. Some people seem to think the conversion of the very young an impossibility; at all events, they always oppose the reception of a child to sealing ordi-

nances, no matter what the evidence of a renewed heart may be. Surely this is wrong. An honorable gentleman, a member for many years of our national Congress, gave me an account of his little daughter, aged eleven, who became a Christian. On inquiring when, and how, her simple, child-like answer was, that while alone in the woods, seeking Christ, and earnestly pleading for His gracious presence, "when she could not help herself, He helped her." She was a child of great intelligence, as well as of deep emotions, and in view of an approaching communion, expressed a desire to become, by public profession, a member of the Church. But as her parents deemed her age and experience too immature, she yielded to their judgment until the season drew nigh. One night after family worship she retired to bed, and her parents also. But before her father had undressed, he heard her little feet come patting down the stairs until she entered the room, and throwing herself on his knee, put her arms about his neck. He saw that something weighed heavy on her heart, and asked her what it was. "Father," she said in reply, "I am not unhappy, but I am not at

rest. I have heard you and other Christians say that you never get so near to Jesus as at the Communion Table, and I want to get as near to Him as I can." What could he say but what he did. "My precious child," replied he, "if that is your experience and your desire, God forbid that I should hinder you." She joined with her parents and a brother, who on the same occasion united with the Church in the communion. "And never," said this Christian father and statesman, "did I see a countenance more bright and sparkling with joy, than that young Christian's face as she sat at the feet of her Saviour. She lived," he added, "to give evidence of deep and growing piety for years, and is now a spirit among the just made perfect in heaven."

Take another case of a little boy twelve years old. He had been a child of affliction, and had endured an operation of a very severe and hazardous character. God had given him his life, in accordance with the prayers of his mother,—who narrated the story to me with her eyes moistened with tears, and her heart apparently yearning for her own sanctification and the salvation of her husband and children,—and

that if spared he might be consecrated to His service and glory. He gave every pleasing evidence of a new heart, with new dispositions and conduct, and a desire in all things to please God. "Mother," said he, one day, "is it not the duty of all whom Christ loves and who love Him, to acknowledge Him by joining His Church, and openly confessing their devotion to Him?" On being informed in the affirmative, he said, "Well, mother, I want to acknowledge Christ; but you say that I am too young. Now I want to know if I die soon, who will take the responsibility of my not having done what Christ requires, for I will not."*

In such cases, and at such an age, I would not feel bound to *advise*, much less to *urge* young persons to unite publicly with the Church. But if they themselves realized the obligation, could give a reason for the hope that is in them, and an intelligent statement of the Lord's Supper, and of their motives in wishing to become the Lord's disciples, I dare not, and would not hinder them. I would hear the Saviour Himself saying, "Suffer such children to come unto

* These are the very words of the little boy, as given to me by his mother, as nearly as I could take them down.

me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." I would remember, also, how when at different times He was calling fathers and mothers, and all who would, to come to Him and confess themselves sorry for their sins that he might forgive and save them. He said, "Sanctify a fast. Call a solemn assembly." And lest they should leave little boys and girls at home, He gave this particular command about such, "BRING THE CHILDREN." God's house is the home of His little ones—the nursery of heaven.

A woman once called to see the mother of a sick child who was dying. After looking upon the little creature, the poor mother said, "Will you pray with my daughter?" "It is only a child," was the strange answer of the unfeeling woman, who had got up to go—"it is only a child." The little girl pushed aside her bedclothes, and cried out with all the strength she had, "Yes, I am a child, but I have a soul." What a reproof! And yet, are there not many, many fathers, many mothers, many pious people who fail to make serious efforts to bring the little ones into the kingdom of God for precisely this reason, "It is *only* a child!"

What will Christ think of such persons? He was once "much displeased," not with those who mocked Him, nor those who plucked out the hair, nor with Peter, who denied Him, nor Judas, who betrayed Him, nor Pilate, who condemned Him, nor the Jews, who crucified Him; but with his Disciples, because they rebuked those who brought little children to him. "Forbid them not," He said. Once also in spirit He rejoiced: but at what? That the multitude thronged His path, strewed His way with palmed branches, and even their own garments, crowded every *spot*, and even climbed the topmost trees and house-tops that they might see Him pass, heard Him gladly, and with universal shout rent the heavens, crying out, "Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" and would at once have made Him King! No; but when lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "I thank Thee, O Father of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Dark was the long predicted night,
When last the little flock assembled,
And watched with awe the approaching light,
And for the fatal morrow trembled;
That morrow which their Lord should see
Extended on the accursed tree.

'Twas then that, with uplifted eye,
He took the sacred bread and brake it:
'Twas then the cup He raised on high,
And bade the astonished mourners "Take it—
Take it; and when this cup you see,
Poor contrite soul, remember me!"

And didst Thou say, "Remember Thee!"
Sooner yon sun shall cease its shining—
Sooner this soul shall cease to be,
Its immortality resigning—
Than this fond heart forget to raise
Its anthems of perpetual praise.

Can I Thy houseless nights forget,
The cold dews on thy temples lying;
The taunts, the spear, the bloody sweat,
The last long agony of dying;
Thy present gifts, so large and free;
The transports of eternity!

And is Thy sacred table deck'd,
Thine own blest hand the feast preparing,
And shall my soul the joy reject
The angelic bands delight in sharing!
I come—I come—oh, hear my prayer!
Blest Saviour, meet my spirit there!

Come, then, to the Lord's Supper, my dear reader, if a mother, with your children in your hearts and in your arms, saying, "Here, Lord, am I, and the children Thou hast given me. Receive them to Thyself, and give them back to me renewed and sanctified in the dew of their youth, and be Thou from this time their God, and guide. Will He not hear you? Yes. He is a covenant-making God, giving mercy unto the children's children even to the third generation of them that love Him. Yes, though He may awhile forbear and deny your request, and turn away from you as from the Syro-Phœnician mother, yet will He not forget or fail of His promises. Trust Him for His grace, and never give Him rest until He bless you.

About a year ago, a young man was apparently very near his end. His pious mother was sitting by his bedside, and supposing that he slept, she covered her face with her hands, that she might repeat the prayer which had been her daily prayer ever since he was born —that this, her son, might become a Christian. Believing that he was near his end, her feelings overcame her, and without her knowing it, her tears flowed out from between her fingers. One

fell upon his hand. This aroused him; and, as if by instinct, divining his mother's feelings, he threw his wasted arm around her neck, saying with deep emotion, "Mother, if I am lost, it will be all my own fault. I will bear testimony at the bar of God that you have been faithful."

When I heard of this, says the pastor, knowing that he had been given to God in solemn covenant, I could not believe that the oft-repeated prayer of his mother would pass unanswered. Indeed, it seemed to me that this, his declaration, was an evidence that the Spirit of God was striving with him; in the exercise of a righteous sovereignty, selecting his own point of attack; taking advantage of the natural affections to awaken in the young man's heart that conviction of sin which would bring him to Jesus' feet. "The wind bloweth where it listeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

That such was the case, the event, I think, has proved. God spared him; not to recover entirely, but so that he lived for about a year. Shortly after the occurrence narrated above, he began to entertain a hope in Christ; and

since then, although confined to his bed for the greater part of the time, he has seemed to grow in grace as rapidly as any Christian I have ever known. Yesterday his willing spirit took its flight—no cloud rolling in to dim faith's vision in the dying hour.

That mother's tear, falling before God's mercy-seat, was blessed, where other, and likelier, and mightier means had failed. A covenant-keeper is the Lord our God. He may try our faith—He will never disappoint our trust.

But, my dear reader, if you are a parent, seek this blessing for your children now. If it is their duty to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and to seek the Lord early, then it is your duty, and not merely your privilege, to expect that they shall now find God in peace. Be not satisfied, then, that you have done all your duty until Christ is actually formed in their hearts the hope of glory. This is their only safety and your only confidence in looking out upon the raging tempestuous sea of life, and remembering how the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of the flesh, like so many rocks and quicksands, imperil their salvation. And

why should you not thus be comforted and they redeemed? What hinders? "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" Is it not as easy for Him to renew the heart of a babe as of an adult? Nay, if there could be any difference, would it not be in favor of the child, before innate depravity has had time to develop itself—before the habit of sinning is formed? Is there any thing in the Bible to forbid our expecting the very early conversion of our children, even before they are capable of knowing good and evil? Not a word, so far as I can find. On the contrary, the covenant of grace made with Abraham, and the indefinite extension of its promises to all who "have like precious faith," afford us the greatest encouragement.

If our Saviour, who took up little children in his arms, were present, would he not say, "O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt?" We know that John the Baptist was sanctified from the womb, and if he was, what hinders other infant children from being in like manner born again?

O what a blessing it would be, to have them adopted, as "the sons and daughters of the

Lord Almighty," as soon as they are born. What a relief it would be to see them giving evidence, as soon as they can lisp the name of Jesus, and hear the wonderful story of his life and death, that they love him. How would it shield them from the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, by which so many are snared and taken, in the critical period of youth.

What pious mother, in embracing her darling babe, can help sometimes fearing, that if it lives to grow up without a new heart, it may become a prodigal son, as so many have, and "bring down her gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." What a relief it would be, if she could indulge a strong persuasion, in the exercise of a lively faith, that her prayers have already been answered, and that the dear little one has already been born again. Who doubts that Samuel was converted in infancy or early childhood, in answer to the prayers of his mother, who "lent him to the Lord as long as he should live." If all parents should lend their little ones to the Lord, with like precious faith, and thus dedicate them to his service all the days of their lives, as Hannah did Samuel

even before he was born, would not the offering be accepted, and their prayers be answered? I believe they would.

So speaks Dr. Humphrey, and so also speak reason, experience, and the whole tenor of the Word of God. And here, at the Table of the Lord, how good, and pleasant, and profitable is the opportunity of seeking both faith to believe, to urge and to expect this unspeakable blessing.

And if, my dear reader—and may this often be the case—you are still young, and the child of religious parents, let me appeal to you. Let a father in Israel address to you a few words.

My young friend bring before you your pious parents. How are they now praying that my attempt to bring you to a decision may be effectual! See you not the tears now dropping from the cheek of thy father—thy mother—at thy side; while each says, "If thy heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine." Some of us can speak from experience. We only recommend what we have exemplified. We were enabled early to dedicate ourselves to God, and we have found his yoke easy, and his burden light. We have found his ways

pleasantness and peace. We have found godliness profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. And, next to the salvation of our souls, we daily praise Him for an early conversion. "I bless thee, O God, for many things," says Beza, in his will and testament, "but especially that I gave up myself to Thee at the early age of sixteen."

Wait then no longer; be encouraged by the assurance, "I love them that love Me; and those that seek Me early shall find Me." If the flower be not blown, offer the bud. And through all the changes of life, and from the borders of the grave, God will honor this surrender, and say, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth."

Or it may be, dear reader, that you are yourself a pious child, and you go to the Lord's Table to weep over a father, who by his thoughtless impenitence and neglect of the great salvation, has resisted the Spirit of Love, and provoked Him to strive no more with him, but to let him alone. What are you to do? Delay is death. The sentence once passed, the Spirit takes His everlasting flight, and his

fate is sealed. Ah, remember that the King comes near to-day. He meets His court laden with gifts and encircled with royalty, while attendant angels minister unto Him. How then can you dare to approach Him, or present your humble claim before Him? Fear not. Hesitate not. Now is your time. Now is the day of salvation. Rush into His presence. Fall down at His feet. Plead for mercy, "and pray, and pray again."

His nature, truth and love,
Engage Him on our side,
When Saints are grieved His bowels move,
And can they be denied?

Take an example. One morning, a beautiful girl, fourteen years of age, presented herself, alone, at the gate of one of the palaces of France. It was when the first Napoleon was Consul. Her tears and woe moved the keeper, a kind-hearted man, to admit her. She found her way to the presence of Napoleon, as he was passing through one of the apartments, accompanied by several of his ministers. In a delirium of emotion, the child rushed to his feet, and exclaimed, "Pardon, sire! pardon for my father!"

"And who is your father?" said Napoleon, kindly. "Who are you?" "I am Miss Lajolais," she replied, "and my father is doomed to die." "Ah, Miss," said Napoleon, "but this is a second time, in which your father has conspired against the State. I can do nothing for you!" "Alas, sire!" the poor child exclaimed, "I know it: but the first time papa was innocent; and to-day I do not ask for justice—I implore pardon, pardon for him!" Napoleon's lips trembled, tears filled his eyes, and taking the little hand of the child in both of his, he tenderly pressed it, and said: "Well, my child, yes! For your sake I will forgive your father. This is enough. Now rise and leave me."

Ah, my dear reader, if such agonizing, earnest importunity, could prevail with the iron hearted emperor under circumstances of such unbidden intrusive boldness, how can you hesitate to approach, or fail to plead with groanings that cannot be uttered or resisted, when you come seeking an audience with

> Jesus who knows full well,
> The heart of every saint.

And who

Invites us all our griefs to tell,
To pray and never faint.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so are His thoughts of mercy above man's thoughts, and His ways above man's ways. You are made a king and a priest unto God, that you may make intercession for the ungodly,—for the chief of sinners, and it is a faithful saying, that the Lord of the feast is able to save to the uttermost, and that as He never sent any away that came to Him, or that were brought to Him, while on earth, neither is He less able or less willing to grant repentance and remission of sins, and to deliver them that are appointed to death, now, that He is exalted at the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour.

And this you will do if you are indeed the Lord's. For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And what was the Spirit of Christ? Did He not come to seek and save the lost? Did He not go about doing good, not pleasing Himself, but counting it His meat and drink to do the will of God, and in securing the salvation of a world guilty before God, enemies, ungodly and with-

out hope? What was his life and death, but one continued sacrifice of Himself for the good of others; and especially for their spiritual and everlasting welfare? And if you are his disciple indeed, you will imitate, represent and follow your divine Master. The love that characterized Him, and love to Him shed abroad and renovating your heart, will constrain you to live not unto yourself, but unto Him that loved you and gave Himself for you. Loving Christ you will love the souls for which He died, and to bring many of whom to glory is still "the travail of His soul." To live, to you, it will be Christ. Life and the world, and opportunity and ability and influence, you will consider as so many talents given in trust by your Lord, who has gone to prepare a place for you in heaven, to be employed in winning souls to Him, and in furthering His glorious kingdom. Yes, if you love Christ, you will keep His commandments, you will make known His gospel to all around you, "compel" them by earnest importunity, to come into His Church, and when thus brought within it, teach them and their children all things whatsoever He commanded.

It is the spirit of Cain, not of Abel to say, am I my brother's keeper? It was only the Egyptian who could remain insensible to the woes which stirred up the heart of Moses to prefer suffering affliction with the people of God, rather than the pleasures of sin for a season. It was only a hardened, selfish heathen who could forget Joseph in the prison. It was only a cruel and perfidious Herod, that could seek to destroy the young child's life, and fill Rama with weeping and bitter lamentation. It was only the hypocritical and false professors of our Saviour's day, who not only would not enter into the kingdom of God themselves, but hindered them also that were entering in. It was the blinded Levite, and the wolfish priest who could pass by on the other side, and leave the poor wounded traveler to welter in the blood of his festering wounds. But it should not be so with you, if indeed Christ is in you. Having suffered, you will have a fellow feeling for all that suffer. Having been long bound in prison, you will feel bound with them that remain in chains under Satan's bondage, and you will strive to open for them the prison doors. Having been dead

and made alive, lost and found, an alien and now a citizen, a starving prodigal and now a Son and heir, a shipwrecked mariner and now rescued from the burning deck of the sinking ship, plucked as a brand from the burning you well deserved, you will labor and strive to deliver others from the same miseries, and unite with all who have assisted in securing your merciful preservation, and present participation in the glorious liberty of the children of God, in delivering them from going down to the pit.

Every communion season may thus be like looking into the glass, and seeing what manner of person you are and ought to be. It will be the re-perusal of your personal history—the review of your past life, and of all God's merciful dealings with you. It will be a re-awakening of your earliest convictions, a rekindling of your first love, and a doing again of your first works. Christ will appear as He once did, "the one altogether lovely," your heaven of holy joy. Earth will lose its charm, and fade before the brightening visions of the inheritance divine. Earthly joys will become insipid, and transient as the crackling of thorns

under a pot, and you will feel that it is better to go to the house of God, than to the house of feasting. You will renew your strength like that of eagles, and taking a fresh start, run the race of holy living. And thus girding up the loins of your mind, and laying aside every weight and the sins that do most easily beset you, you will enter with new devotion upon every labor of love, not wearying in well doing, knowing that in due time you shall reap the recompense of great reward.

I love thy kingdom Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

I love thy church, O God!
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

If e'er to bless thy sons
My voice or hands deny,
These hands let useful skill forsake,
This voice in silence die.

If e'er my heart forget
Her welfare, or her woe,
Let every joy this heart forsake,
And every grief o'erflow.

For her my tears shall fall;
For her my prayers ascend:
To her my cares and toils be given,
'Till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

A word to those who from whatever cause, are not Members of the Church.

What shall I say, my dear reader, unto you? I would beseech you by the mercies of God, to present yourself unto Christ your Saviour, body, soul and spirit, a living sacrifice, which is your reasonable service. I would say, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Christ. I would say, take the cup of salvation into your hands, and pay your vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of the congregation. I would say,—Come out from the world and be separate, forsake also thine own kindred and thy father's house, and cleave unto the Lord. I would say, First give yourself unto the Lord, and then unto His church and people, according to the will of God. I would say,—Be not ashamed of Christ and His cross, before a

wicked and adulterous generation, for if any man is ashamed of Christ now, of him will Christ be ashamed before His Father and the holy angels. I would say,—Believe on Christ with thine heart, and confess Him with thy mouth; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. I would say,—Join yourself to the company of believers. Be added to the church. Come to Mount Zion. Forsake not the assembling together of Christ's flock. I would say, Become a disciple by that public profession of which baptism is the sacramental sign and seal, and having thus been introduced into the church, seek to be taught, and to obey all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. And as Christ has also instituted the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and commanded its observance in remembrance of Him till He come, I would say,—Do this. Examine your own heart, whether you can discern the Lord's body in the broken bread and the outpoured wine, and so eat and drink not unworthily.

This you have not done. All these things which are substantially stated in the language

of Scripture, you have left undone. They are to you as if they had not been written in the Bible, or commanded by God, or made essential to your hope and character as a Christian, and a rightful expectant of heaven. You are at this moment, living as far as these requirements of heaven are concerned, without God in the world, and as if they had no reference to you, and were no concern of yours.

You may do this because you do not believe the Bible, or because you do not believe these duties to be essential, or because you do not think they are obligatory upon any but those who feel willing and able to fulfil them. Or you may consider union with the church so sacred and solemn a transaction as to require a man to be fully persuaded in his own mind, that he is perfectly able to maintain and persevere in, a walk and conversation according to godliness. Or, you may imagine, like Nicodemus, that you may be a Christian, and yet not a disciple purely for fear of the shame, or the loss of that honor which cometh from man, and that you may do many things and yet be a Christian, while out of the church, which you could not, and would not do if in the church.

Or by identifying yourself with some one denomination, you may suppose that you will thereby curtail your influence and popularity with all classes and conditions of men. Many are the shades of particular opinion and prejudice, or of wilful and obstinate disinclination which hinder men from considering the subject of personal religion, and of seriously weighing the question:—"Ought I to join the church?" But whatever they are, they are all alike insufficient, unreasonable, and inexcusably wrong. They involve one and all the principle of disobedience, the denial of God's authority, the wilful substitution of self-will and personal inclination, and private opinion for the plain, positive and immutable requirements of the word and will of God. They display the spirit and motive —the animus—of all sin. And as he who offendeth in one point, is guilty of all, and he is cursed who continueth not in all things written in the law to do them, and he that breaketh the least of these commandments, is an offender just as truly as he who breaketh the greatest, and as God will by no means clear the guilty—"therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man."

Heaven and earth might more easily be made by you to pass away, than one jot or tittle of that glorious gospel of the blessed God, of which the Lord's supper is an everlasting covenant that shall never be broken, a memorial that endureth for ever to all generations, and which, therefore, if neglected or despised, will be a swift witness against you.

"Of Zion—that is the Church, the homestead and birth-place of all the children of God—it shall be said, This and that man was born in her, and the highest Himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count when He writeth up the people that this man was born there."

"One shall say, *I* am the Lord's; and another shall call *himself* by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with *his* hand unto the Lord, and surname *himself* with the name of Israel."

Nor is the Church alone sacred. Each individual Christian is a consecrated temple. The Church is a collection of hallowed individuals. On each separately is inscribed, "*Holiness to the Lord.*" The Church is a glorious sanctuary, built up of individual Christians, each fitted and polished by the hand of the great Builder.

"What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and that ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Who, then, are Christ's? Who can hope in the Lord? Who "have put on Christ, and are found in Him," and will be "blessed" even when "dead," because "in the Lord?" "As many of you," answerest the Apostle, (Gal. iii. 27,) "as have been baptized"—baptism being the sacrament of initiation and public profession of discipleship into Christ—"have put on Christ." "Verily, verily, I say unto thee," says Christ Himself, who is to judge the quick and the dead, "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit,"—be inwardly converted and outwardly confess and follow Christ into His Church and ordinances—"he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." "What will you then say to these things?" "Despise ye the church of God," "which He purchased with His own blood," of which "such glorious things are spoken," which is the "joy of the whole earth," and of which

When God makes up His last account,
Of children in His holy Mount;
'Twill be an honor to appear,
As one new born and nourished there?

Ah, my dear reader, in despising or disesteeming the Church, you know not what you do. Your course, if pursued by others, would despoil that Church of its beauty, deface its glory, empty it, and leave it desolate, yea, raze it to the ground. But it cannot do this. It can only destroy yourself. For while by joining hand in hand with the gates of hell, you cannot prevail against the Church, yet, if you hold your peace and will not come in and become an indweller—God, "out of the very stones of the streets," and from the outcast rocks lying in waste and desert places in the yet unquarried mines of heathenism, will raise up children who will count her stones; to whom her very dust will be dear; who will come unto Zion with joy; walk and go around about her, mark well her bulwarks; tell the towers thereof; consider her palaces, that they may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

Say not that this duty is voluntary, and this ordinance one not of positive, but of imperfect obligation. It is voluntary just as salvation is voluntary; but it is also just as necessary, as imperative and as plainly commanded—so far as opportunity will permit—as is salvation. The same God worketh in them that believe "to WILL and to DO, according" to ALL His commandments. The same Saviour who died to save, lives to reign and to rule over us. He who said, "Come unto Me," said also, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." He who said, "I will give you rest. To as many as believe, I will give power to become the sons of God," said also, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

"Whosoever therefore, shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daugh-

ter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life, for My sake, shall find it."

The obligation to be a disciple of Christ, is therefore, so essential to a Christian, that he who is not with Christ—Christ himself says it—is against Him, and he that gathereth not with Him scattereth abroad. To be united with Christ's cause and Church is necessary then to the very condition of a Christian, and is inseparable from it. Every one who claims the Christian name, and indulges the Christian hope, and looks for the Christian's heaven, must surely take upon him the Christian's yoke, bear the Christian's burden, and wear the Christian's badge; and can only reject them by rejecting Christ, and giving the lie to all his deceiving hopes—his refuges of lies. "For if we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness—the world lieth in darkness —we lie and do not the truth."

"There must, in every case of well grounded hope in Christ, be therefore, a *personal consecration.* How direct the command, follow *thou*

me! How marked the Apostle's formula of discipleship, giving first *yourselves* unto the Lord! The whole man, body and spirit, must be laid on the altar. Every power and faculty be consecrated to God. Each disciple for himself must make for himself this offering. The Jew of olden time devoted to the altar the choicest of his herd and of his flock, but the Christian brings a nobler gift. 'Here, Lord, I give *myself* away.' How solemn the vow, 'I am the Lord's.' Consecrated by a solemn vow, I can never cease to be a hallowed offering. My own heart prompted the gift; my own lip breathed the vow; my own hand signed the deed; and I gave, ''twas all I had to give,' *myself* unto God."

If, then, it were absurd as well as guilty, for any man to claim the honor of a soldier while refusing to join the ranks, submit to discipline, and fight manfully;—or the recompense of a servant while disobeying commanded rules and neglecting required duty;—or for a child to expect the love and confidence and nourishment of parents, while gainsaying and disobedient and without natural affection;—or for a student to expect honors and applause, while

utterly careless of his studies and deportment;—how much more is this the case with that man who dares to hope for salvation through the divine Redeemer, while instead of confessing Him before men, he sets Him at naught, and instead of commemorating the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Him, he goes his way, and "makes light of it," "cares for none of these things," "waits for a convenient season," and says, practically, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?" "He that saith, I know Him and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

You may think you can do as much good out of the church as in it, and that you are better than many who are members of the church. I must however tell you, that you cannot serve two masters—that you must love the one and hate the other—that if not with Christ you are against Him—if not a friend a foe—that if you are indeed His, you are one of a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people separate from the world, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you from darkness into his marvellous

light. It is into his vineyard Christ says, "My Son, go and work." It is only there you can find the husbandman and the incorruptible seed, and the dew of heaven, and the good ground, and that blessing which maketh rich, and in the evening the promised wages, even an hundred fold in the present world, and in the world to come, life everlasting.

"If, therefore," says Bunyan, "thou wouldst so run as to obtain the kingdom of heaven, then be sure that thou get into the way that leadeth thither; for it is a vain thing to think that ever thou shalt have the prize, though thou runnest never so fast, unless thou art in the way that leads to it. Set the case that there should be a man in London that was to run to York for a wager; now though he run never so swiftly, yet if he runs full south, he might run himself quickly out of breath, and be never nearer the prize, but rather the farther off. Just so is it here: it is not simply the runner, nor the hasty runner, that winneth the crown, unless he be in the way that leadeth thereto."

And as it regards the members of the church, you are to consider that in the present, earthly, visible dispensation, the Church is a field

where there are tares as well as wheat; a flock in which there are goats as well as sheep; a fold in which there are rotten as well as sound sheep; a net in which there are good fish and bad; and a house in which there are vessels unto honor and vessels unto dishonor; a vineyard in which there are dry trees as well as green, and barren as well as fruitful fig trees; a tree on which there are unfruitful branches fit only to be burned, and fruitful branches which are trimmed and tended so as to bring forth more fruit; a family in which there are disobedient and obedient sons, a Judas as well as a John, and foolish as well as wise virgins; and a body in which there are diseased, and feeble, and even palsied limbs, as well as those which are healthy. The end is not yet. "The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels." Then will come the sifting time, the testing time, the time for binding up in bundles, the in-gathering and the glorifying time. And then, too, all beyond the church—the world—the outlying fallow ground, the wild, waste, unprofitable wilderness—will be burned up. Then, while the redeemed shall ride safely in the ark Christ Jesus, over the fiery bil-

lows of a devastated "earth and heavens," the unbelieving generation that would not hear God's warning voice, listen to His commands, embrace His invitation, and come into the ark—they and their wives and children—shall perish and sink like lead in the depths of the devouring flames.

What THEN, O thou neglecter of God's ordinance, will be all thy vain excuses for remaining away from God; without God as a God in covenant; without Christ as your Master, Lord and Shepherd; aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise; prodigals in a far country, an hungered and yet laboring for that which is not bread, toiling for that which satisfieth not, dead while they live, without hope, nigh unto cursing, already condemned? Surely, all your vain excuses are no better, no wiser, and not less ungodly than the ungodly speeches of those who refused to come to the palace and the marriage supper of the King when bidden of Him, because one had a farm he wished to visit, another a wife he wished to please, another ten yoke of oxen he desired to prove. And when that King of glory shall come in His Father's

kingdom to see the guests—then, oh then, if not wise to-day—you, like them, shall either be shut out and cast into outer darkness, or even if it were possible for you to enter in without having received through His appointed means of grace, the wedding garment, when the King shall ask,—"Friend, how camest thou in hither?" you will be speechless. And then shall the King say unto His servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

But what, you will say, would you have me to do? I am not a Christian; I am not converted, sanctified and saved; and would you have me *as such* and *while such*, join the Church. Not so. God forbid. But, here, my dear reader, is the awfulness of your case. Your excuse is your guilt, the very head and front of your offending, the heinousness and inexcusableness and self-condemning evidence of your rebellious enmity to God. Yes, this is your condemnation, that you will not come unto the light because your deeds—the whole temper and spirit and disposition of your heart—is evil. You hide yourself like Adam,

because, conscious of your offence, and shun the light, because it reveals the hidden things of darkness that lurk in the chambers of imagery where you have set up your idols, and where you fall down and serve them day and night, defiling the temple of God, and provoking a jealous God to anger.

Christ, who is the Lord of the Church, is also its Saviour. He who commands these duties gave strength to perform them. All the fitness you require is, to feel your need of Him, for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of God; all you need for pardon, peace and purity, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is the author of faith, the giver of repentance, the upholder and preserver of all who trust in Him. The very fitness you require for this ordinance He therefore, offers, urges on you, entreats, persuades and beseeches you to accept. But you will not. You will not come to Him and have life. You will not believe and be saved. You will not submit, and be accepted, restored, reconciled and redeemed. You reject Christ, and then disobey His commandments. You will not come to the God of ordinances, and then excuse

yourself for trampling under foot as an unholy, useless thing, the ordinances of God.

You are in a strait betwixt two. Scylla frowns terribly on your left, and Charybdis on your right, while between roll the dark waters of perdition, and on the shore sits the Syren, singing you to sleep and luring you to destruction. Before you is the shoreless, bottomless ocean of eternity, with its perdition of ungodly men. On either side are the unscaleable mountains. Behind you come rushing on, death, judgment and hell, with their fierce legions of devils, ready to torment you before the time, and hurling on you the fiery thunderbolts of God's law and curse, God's threatenings and penalties.

My dear reader, escape—escape for thy life. Cry unto God. Cry and spare not. There is none else can deliver. Ask, then, until you receive. Seek until you find. Knock until the door of mercy is opened. Lay hold upon God's strength. Cling to the horns of the altar, and fall into the hands of God. Submit! Submit! Yield yourself now unto Him, as in Christ Jesus He is reconciling sinners unto Himself, as His servants to obey Him. Lay

down the weapons of your rebellion, and say unto Him, Now I am Thy servant, O Lord. Do with me, O Lord, as seemeth unto Thee good. God be merciful to me a sinner.

Wait not, O delaying sinner, for God in some miraculous manner to convert you. God has been waiting for you these many years—waiting to be gracious, and by His long-suffering forbearance, leading you to repentance. And now, even now, He is seated on a throne of grace to which He invites you to come with boldness, that you may obtain grace and mercy.

Wait not for the Holy Spirit. For has He not already worked in you to will and to do, convincing you of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, of your guilt, danger and duty, of the desirableness and necessity of a good hope, and a right preparation for death. "Tell other sinners," said a lady who had long been waiting to obtain the Holy Spirit, "that He is waiting for them. They do not know it, I am sure, any more than I did, or they would not grieve and resist, and provoke Him as they do." Resist then no longer. Grieve Him no more. Yield to His heavenly influence, and depend-

ing on his promised guidance and help for all your infirmities, cast yourself on that divine Saviour whose He is, and to whom He leads.

Wait not for Christ to come to you, but come to Him. Has He not come? Is He not near. Is He not nigh thee, with thee, even in thine heart. Does He not at least, stand at the door of that heart of thine, knocking for admittance, and saying, "Open unto me and I will come in, and take up My abode with you and bless you." He is not absent though invisible—nor far away, though in heaven; nor uninterested, though set at nought so long; nor unwilling, though so unkindly, ungenerously distrusted. It is not necessary for you to be carried by the Spirit to heaven to find Christ. Only believe. Venture on Him—venture wholly. You are in darkness, but He sees you. You know not what to do, but He knows all and will guide you right. You have no power, but neither had the man with the withered arm, nor the palsied, nor the dead, and surely He who gave them life and ability, will give you power to become the Son of God. "Don't you think," remarked one, who had long wearied herself in going about seeking for Christ,

in some sermon, or meeting, or pastoral conversation, or in some book, and yet had not found Him, "that the reason why we do not get out of darkness sooner, is because we do not believe. I now know what to do. I must trust in Jesus Christ, and I believe God will enable me to do so. We have nothing to do but to trust." Yet, dear reader, this is ALL YOU CAN DO; and blessed be God, it is ALL you are required to do. Take Christ then at His word, and you may be very sure His word shall stand, and that He will make it good. Not only MAY you do this. You OUGHT to do it. You MUST do it or perish. "God commands every man to repent and believe." "Believe and thou shalt be saved." "The obedience of faith," is the only acceptable obedience—a faith relying on God's assurance, acting upon it, hoping in it, and expecting all it promises. Justify not, then, your unbelief by "making God a liar," and thus adding sin to sin.

Wait not for a revival in your church or neighborhood. It may never come. It may come and you be gone. It may come and find you hardened through unbelief. Besides, it is not necessary. Salvation is a personal con-

cern. You cannot be saved in a crowd. You must individually, in your own heart, with your own power of will and choice, and with your own love and desire, be converted and turned unto God, and that Spirit by whom alone you can do this, is now promised to them that ask Him.

Wait, then, for nothing. Above all, wait not for a more convenient season. What are you to do in the meantime? You are mortal. You are in the hands of that God against whom you are sinning, and with whom you are trifling. You are abusing His grace, wasting His opportunities, dishonoring His authority, disobeying His commands, denying His rightful claims, withholding His purchased and redeemed soul, refusing His offered pardon, rejecting His Son, grieving His Spirit, and risking everlasting destruction upon the uncertainty of life and the continued forbearance of a God already angry and weary of your shameful provocation.

God calls you now—dare no longer to disobey. God invites you now—turn no longer an ear, deaf as an adder, to the kind inviting voice. God in tears weeps over you, as He

did over Jerusalem, saying, "Oh that thou wouldst know, even now, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace before they are forever hidden from thine eyes."—Oh let not those tears of the blessed Redeemer dry upon your cheek, or fall unheeded to the ground. God is sparing you, and has given you this fresh opportunity to turn unto Him and live. "See then that you refuse not Him that speaketh from heaven!" Refuse the offers of wealth from him that would bestow it. Neglect that disease which is preying upon your vitals, and which when once fastened upon a human system was never known to relax its grasp. Walk carelessly along that bending and creaking plank which carries you so dangerously over the deep and howling cataract. Sleep soundly upon the giddy top of the lofty mast while the winds are shrieking in frantic rage amid the bare ropes and poles, and the mountain waves are rising up to heaven. Build the foundations of your future life, where you wish to enjoy the comforts of a quiet life in the bosom of an endeared family, on the now slumbering but soon to be boisterous waves. Let your vessel glide along smoothly without wind or

tide, while you hear the faint and feeble sound increase even into the dread rumbling tone of the Maelstrom's awful moan. And while you flow on resistlessly in ever-nearing circles, until the fearful sight, as if hell from beneath opening to receive you appals your view, and in fiercer whirl, you roll round the dread abyss, sing joyously and laugh all fear to scorn. Do any or all of these things. Do any thing, if possible, even more mad and suicidal, but despise not the voice of God which now speaks to you, saying, "To-day, if you will hear my voice, harden not your heart as in the day of provocation, when God swore concerning Israel that they should not enter into His rest." That voice then shook the earth, made the mountain to quake, and its very rocks to burst, so that the whole assembly hid themselves for dread, and even Moses exceedingly feared and quaked. Despise not then that voice which shall once again rend not the earth only but also the heavens, yea, wake the sleeping dead from the slumber of ages, to stand in judgment before Him. Oh, sinner, hearken to that voice as a voice of warning mercy, that you may not listen to it as a voice of indignation and wrath; "For if the

word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

Ah, my dear reader, you may not fear the power of man's wrath; but I will tell you whom you shall fear: "Fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell forever. Yea, I say unto you, fear Him. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; for our God is a consuming fire, and according to His power so also is His wrath."

There is a voice of sovereign grace
Sounds from the sacred word;
Ho! ye despairing sinners come,
And trust upon the Lord."

My soul obeys the almighty call,
And runs to this relief;
I would believe Thy promise, Lord,
Oh! help my unbelief.

To the dear fountain of thy blood,
Incarnate God, I fly!
Here let me wash my spotted soul
From crimes of deepest dye.

Stretch out thine arm, victorious King,
My reigning sins subdue;
Drive the old dragon from his seat,
With his apostate crew.

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all!

Do this, my dear reader. Do this now, once and forever, and then you shall know of the doctrines that they are of God, and the power of God unto salvation; knowing, you will grow in knowledge and perfect strength in the fear of the Lord until you come to learn Christ's immeasurable grace, and to feel the joys that cannot be expressed. Then shall the Church become to you a home, a school, a gymnasium, a vineyard, a field which the Lord hath blest, a garden blossoming and fragrant as the rose. Then, too, the world and life, and labor, hitherto so irksome and hard to bear, shall become like the wilderness converted into a fruitful place, a yoke that is easy and a burden that is light. And then will the Lord's Supper become to you a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, pleasant to the eye, sweet to the taste, delightful to the smell, nourishing to the soul as bread to the hungry, in the heart a well of living water, and to the whole inner man strength in the Lord, and power from

His grace, with which to run with patience the race set before you, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Ah wretched souls, who strive in vain,
Slaves to the world, and slaves to sin!
A nobler toil may I sustain;
A nobler satisfaction win.

May I resolve with all my heart,
With all my powers to serve the Lord;
Nor from His precepts e'er depart,
Whose service is a rich reward.

O! be His service all my joy!
Around let my example shine,
Till others love the blest employ,
And join in labors so divine.

Be this the purpose of my soul,
My solemn, my determined choice,
To yield to His supreme control,
And in his kind commands rejoice.

O! may I never faint nor tire,
Nor wandering leave His sacred ways:
Great God, accept my soul's desire,
And give me strength to live Thy praise.

SELF DEDICATION TO GOD.

Lord, I am Thine, entirely Thine,
Purchased and saved by blood divine;
With full consent Thine I would be,
And own Thy sovereign right in me.

Grant one poor sinner more a place,
Among the children of thy grace;
A wretched sinner, lost to God,
But ransomed by Immanuel's blood.

Thine would I live, Thine would I die,
Be Thine through all eternity;
The vow is past beyond repeal;
Now will I set the solemn seal.

Here at that cross where flows the blood
That bought my guilty soul for God;
Thee, my new Master now I call,
And consecrate to Thee my all.

Do Thou assist a feeble worm,
The great engagement to perform;
Thy grace can full assistance lend,
And on that grace I dare depend.

CHAPTER XI.

A PLEA FOR THE CHURCH.

Ah, sinner, that church you despise or disesteem, or, at least, disregard, is the very thing you need, and for which your soul craves. With unsatisfied desires and unquenchable longings it seeks for rest within itself, and finds only an empty void which neither the world nor home, nor business, nor any earthly enjoyments can ever fill. Hungry and thirsty, it turns away from the dull satieties of earth, and pines for want of heavenly manna and living water. Wearied amid the fretful circumstances of passing time and the unvarying round of sublunary prospects, it despondingly asks, "Who will show me any good?" And solitary and alone amid bustling crowds and gay, festive halls, it sighs for the wings of a dove, that it might fly away and be at rest. Yes, poor soul, thou needest rest and findest none, and never can find any, except in God

and in God's own house, and in the consolations there provided for you. The spark divine within thee,

Like a dim lamp that o'er a river shines,
Still in thy soul sounds the deep undertone
Of some unmeasurable, boundless time.
That still, small voice calls to your Father's house,
The mountain of your rest, the kingdom of the skies,
In heavenly grace and beauty warm with life,
With saints and angels peopling all her courts.

Many thousand hearts now happy and at home in the Church, rejoicing in the goodly fellowship of the saints and enjoying spiritual health from spiritual activity, can give their experience in the language of that beautiful lyric:

People of the living God,
I have sought the world around,
Paths of sin and sorrow trod,
Peace and comfort no where found:
Now to you my spirit turns,
Turns a fugitive unblest;
Brethren, where your altar burns,
O! receive me into rest.

Lonely, I no longer roam,
Like the cloud, the wind, the wave;
Where you dwell shall be my home,
Where you die shall be my grave;

Mine the God whom you adore,
Your Redeemer shall be mine;
Earth can fill my soul no more,
Every idol I resign.

Tell me not of gain or loss,
Ease, enjoyment, pomp or power,
Welcome poverty and cross,
Shame, reproach, affliction's hour:
"Follow me;" I know thy voice;
Jesus, Lord, thy steps I see;
Now I take thy yoke, by choice;
Light thy burden now to me.

Make that choice, dear reader, yours, and this experience will be yours. Yes! in the Church there is for you a home, home-rest, and home-happiness. It is at once the emblem, the proof, and the earnest of the heavenly home,—the earthly fold of the Good Shepherd—the well in the valley—the homestead of Christ's family, where out of His treasury He supplies all their wants, and dwells among them to bless them and to do them good.

The earth's one sanctuary
Where in the shadow of the rock we dwell,
The rock of strength.

To it are given the oracles of God, the promises, the means of grace, the feast of love, the

communion of souls. Here the stranger finds a welcome, the alien the privileges of citizenship, the orphan the adoption of sons, and the lost, dead prodigal a joyous home. Here love and sympathy, encouragement and kindness dwell. Received into this family of God with joy such as is felt by the angels over one sinner that repenteth, you will feel

> No more a stranger or a guest,
> But like a child at home.

Here the lost is found and the dead made alive again. The weary traveler is seated by the fireside, and his heart cheered with the wine of consolation. A mortal immortal knocks at the gate, and is admitted for a night and for ever. The scene and the locality may, like a dissolving view, pass from the light, but the heart-union formed among the brotherhood will be durable as the years of eternity; and while the sranger just admitted may be a cold corpse to-morrow, he becomes one of a family known, in the language of God, as "the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven," meet for God's golden house in highest heaven above.

And most surely is it true that as an indwelling and adopted sonship in the church on earth is a blessed privilege, it is also in all ordinary cases an essential prerequisite for a dwelling place among the sons of God throughout a blessed immortality. For will it not be admitted that in the harvest no other than the fruits of the Lord's garden will be gathered into the Lord's storehouse? And is it not equally plain that only those trees of righteousness that have been planted in the house of the Lord by the river of life, and there nourished by the dew from heaven and by the rich soil the sweet juices and the reviving air of God's ordinances, can flourish in the courts of our God. These alone—having stuck their roots deep into the earth, and having spread them out so as to drink in the unfailing moisture of that flowing stream which makes glad the city of God,—can sustain themselves through seasons of drought and exposure to the burning rays of the sun, to bleak and wintry storms, to the drifting snow and the freezing ice. How self-evident is it then, that of all this process from the first planting of the divinely quickened seed to the full growth and maturity

and fruit-harvesting of the tree, a profession of religion is the first and necessary step, a part, and an indispensable part.

It is therefore by being born in Zion, and nourished as a babe in Christ at her bosom, you are to grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, until matured in grace as a son or daughter of the Lord God Almighty, you are prepared for an inheritance among the saints in light.

It is true, sadly true, that such is not the view taken of the Church by men generally. To them she presents no form or comeliness, no grace or beauty, wherefore they should desire her. They see only the wrinkles on her forehead, and the scars upon her wounded sides and bleeding hands. They hear only the sounds of her intestine broils and public strife. They look only upon what to them appear her forms of godliness which seem only unmeaning, heartless services. She is to them only as a tent to which the wayfaring man turns aside for a momentary repose from the fatigue and weariness of his journey, but not as the home

Where his best friends, his kindred dwell,
Where God his Saviour reigns.

The Church is to such, therefore, only what the court-house, the hall of legislature or the place of fashionable resort is to their frequenters—a place solemn, awful, or pompously formal, an arena of debate, a forum of strife, an outward seeming of reverence, and respect and love, while within there may be nothing but hypocrisy, selfishness and malevolence.

True, sadly true it is, that for such views there is often too much ground. A church made up of imperfect creatures in an imperfect state, must have many imperfections, and fall greatly below the standard and pattern of it showed in the Mount,—far below what it might and ought to be and what it yet will be. In the church, we are ready to imagine, one might hope to meet with nothing to mar, and everything to enhance our enjoyment of the rest of God. It is not however precisely so, and the fact that it is not so, is frequently a grievous stumbling-block in the course of the young believer.

And yet, if this evil be confronted and surveyed, it will disquiet less. It will be ascer-

tained to be an evil *in part imaginary*, *in part exaggerated*, and *in part real and great, but still subservient to good.*

That there are on some points different opinions among true believers is to a great extent an *imaginary evil.* No mind but one can justly comprehend all the truths, with all their relations, which fill the paradise of revelation. Among finite, ignorant and unsanctified men there must be various and discordant views of this boundless universe of truth. If then this Christian sees more of one truth and that of another, and if each states his opinion with his reasons for it kindly, the deficiencies in the general fund of Christian knowledge will be continually diminished, and apparent differences will be found to arise more from imperfect and partial views than from any contradiction either in spirit or in faith.

That there are great failings observable in *some* Christians, is an *exaggerated evil*, because that which is special is attributed to the whole body. Were a man to enter a garden, of which many fruits and flowers were excellent, and bring forth from it nothing but a handful of weeds, how absurd as well as false would it be

to represent these as samples of the general products of the garden, the character of its soil, and the taste and skill of the gardener? And while it is not less unreasonable, is it not very wicked to hold up the inconsistencies and open apostacy of a few professors who grow up as tares among the wheat, as representatives of what all Christians really are?

Again. The Church on earth, in order to be universal, visible, open as a vineyard, a field, and a sanctuary to all, and under the supervision of weak and fallible men, must necessarily contain tares as well as wheat, barren as well as fruitful trees, and bad as well as good worshippers. And the reason is very obvious. God alone is the discerner of the heart; God alone knows the end as well as the beginning, and who therefore will finally be saved; and as the present dispensation of the Church is only temporary and preparatory, and the harvest is at the end of the world, God has ordained that both tares and wheat shall now grow and mature and develop their perfect character together.

The most halt and stumbling Christian, too, may often be the most humble and sincere. The

soiled and tattered garment may cover a warm and loving heart. Wounds and bruises and putrifying sores, may be as the rough and carbuncled shell that protects the diamond. And of many whom the world contemns and the Church itself doubts, it may be said that each one of them is

> A king, even now a king thrice blest,
> No longer by his foes oppressed,
> Though still he hides from mortal ken
> The flashing of his diadem.

And is not this arrangement, though attended with many evils, though it occasions many scandals, offences, heresies and divisions, made subservient to much good? Is it not an exhibition of kindness and forbearance and mercy to the unthankful ungodly world, and is it not a test of faith and love and loyalty to Christ's faithful followers?

These tares are not the wheat, though growing with them in the same field, and enjoying the same rain and sunshine and laborious cultivation. These scandals, and offences, and heresies, and divisions, are not the genuine and intended fruits of the vineyard, though they are often found in rank luxuriance,

flourishing in the courts of the Lord. These apostates are not genuine disciples. Such are, indeed, *in* and *of* Israel, but they are not Israel. They are a mixed multitude that go up with Israel to the promised land, who are now made helpful to her, and whose very vices are set before her as warnings. And while the Church visible and outward is, indeed, like Joseph's coat of many colors, and like Babel's voices the many tongues of her divided tribes who understand not one another's speech, yet among those scattered multitudes there is a sacred race, a chosen inheritance of God; and from that din of confused and rabble jargon there comes up the swelling sound of blest voices uttering praise and adoration to the one living and true God.

Be not then deceived by outward seeming. Many, it is admitted, are the evils, and many the divisions of the Church of God. But within all these, and notwithstanding them, the true, the invisible, the spiritual church exists in its indivisible sublime unity. Consecrated by a divine vocation, enlisted to a heavenly calling, and animated by celestial patriotism, this sacramental host of God's elect moves forward as

one consecrated host, under one leader and commander, and with one single end in view—the spiritual conquest of the world. The principle which prophecies and promotes this union must operate wherever the Spirit of the Lord is.

The eye of sense sees only the outward. To it these separate companies, with their diversified uniform, their distinct leaders and various banners, occupying each their several positions, and marching to the sound of their own music, appear like so many hostile bands. Or, to change the figure and contemplate the Church as one common family and brotherhood of which Christ is the Head, then, to the eye of the carnal observer, the misconception is just the same. The stranger knows nothing of the joys and communion of the domestic circle. The ripples that occasionally break the placidity of the fountain may attract his vision, but he knows nothing of the deep, silent, constant love and soul-refreshing intercourse that make glad the city of our God. Any man may be witness to the confusion and disorder incident to house-keeping and house-cleaning and table preparation. Any man may be witness to the many little bickerings and harsh

speeches that may break forth, like sparks from the domestic hearth, or like steam from the domestic urn "which cheers but not inebriates." But the fireside chat, the household cheer, the smiles, the jokes, the laugh, the pleasant repartee, the look answering look of affection, the silent, secret, soul-subduing sympathy and love which weep with whoever weeps, and rejoice with whoever is happy,—the inner life, in short, which lives in every member of the family and is common to all—this he cannot see or feel. "A stranger intermeddleth not therewith." No, there must be a vital union in order to a real communion in this life, and love and happiness. And if this is so in earthly, how much more true is it in heavenly things, which can only be spiritually discerned, and of which the natural heart can know nothing? How much greater, then, must be the misjudgment of those who estimate the life and love of Christ and His Church by what is visible in the outer life of Christian men; imperfect men; men who are, as yet, only as babes and children in Christ; immature; seeing as through a glass darkly; and knowing only in part. The very perfection

of love and beauty and holiness in the gospel, throws its followers into sad and melancholy contrast. They are seen as faces are through false reflectors — distorted, caricatured, and every blemish immensely magnified.

Christians are not yet what they ought to be and shall be. But we know they shall be all like Him who is the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Even now, and here, amid all their weaknesses and deformities and disagreements, there is among them all a family likeness, a family relationship, an indissoluble bond, an invisible, secret, all-powerful sympathy. Only let some common enemy approach, some common danger alarm, some common revival enkindle their affections, —only let some calamity common to all occur, some death which is vital to all take place, some thoughts that breathe and words that burn be uttered by any voice in the entire family of God,—and there is at once awakened a responsive voice in the whole heart of Christendom throughout every one of its widely-separated families. Oh, yes! and when—as in the case of Carey, or Chalmers, or Martyn, or Judson, or Williams—some champion of the

faith falls in the high places of the field fighting manfully for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and contending earnestly for the common salvation even until death silences the shout of "victory"—and whether it shall have been by the labors of his pen or by the labors of his life—whether he shall have lived in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America,—and to whatever portion of the church he may have been attached,—there will go up a voice of lamentation, because a mighty man has fallen in Israel. The record of his valorous achievements will kindle a flame of devotion in the bosom of every soldier of the cross. The song of triumph and the shout of victory will go up to heaven from every tribe and tent in Israel, for the glorious achievements of his life and death. His relation to one denomination will be lost in his common relation to all. His name and his greatness will be considered a common inheritance, and be remembered with grateful praise and a common glorying in all lands, by all denominations, and to the remotest posterity. All envy, jealousy, and sectarian selfishness will be lost in the contemplation of Christian genius and de-

votion, and these heroes of the cross will take their places in the firmament of heaven there to shine as stars, and, as a great cloud of witnesses encompass the church in her march through the wilderness.

> Thee in them, O Lord, most high,
> Them in Thee we glorify;
> Glory, O Lord, to Thee alone,
> Who thus hast glorified Thine own.

Here, then, is the evidence and the earnest of that unity of spirit, of faith, hope, and charity, which animate every follower of the Lamb. And how does this common affection, this spirit of brotherhood, break its silence and receive audible manifestation in every prayer they offer. When, bowing before the common mercy-seat, how do

> The saints in prayer appear as one,
> In word, and deed, and mind;
> While with the Father, and the Son,
> Sweet fellowship they find.
>
> The soul caught up on wings of love,
> Communes with happier souls above;
> Burst is the separating girth,
> And earth is heaven and heaven is earth.

Yes, let true believers only be brought together here, and they feel that they have one language, one country, one fatherland, and that

they are fellow-citizens of one glorious kingdom. Their hearts run together as do the particles of quicksilver, and you might as well try to separate the confluent atoms of air as to dissever their united hearts. Two converts from different parts of the heathen world, and by the instrumentality of missionaries of different denominations were once brought forward at a missionary meeting on the same platform. They had not known or seen each other before. They could not speak each other's language. But through the medium of the missionaries present they were introduced, and made acquainted with each others conversion to God, and union to Christ and His church. Their countenances were immediately lighted up. Their eyes were filled with tears. They rushed into each others' arms and embraced one another as brethren. Thus do Christians loving the same Saviour who begat them by His grace to the same blessed hope, love also each other because begotten by Him.

The faith for which saints once endured
The dungeon and the stake,
That very faith with hearts assured
Upon our lips we take.

Though scattered widely left and right,
And sent to various posts,
One is the battle that we fight
Beneath one Lord of Hosts.

We know not, we shall never know
Our fellow-laborers here,
But they that strive and toil below,
Shall with one crown appear.

Oh! taste then, dear reader, and see that the Lord is good. Come among us, and with us, and we will show you good, and your heart shall delight itself with joys unspeakable and full of glory. Drinking water out of these wells of salvation, and eating meat with gladness and singleness of heart at the table of the Lord in His own banquet-hall, you will feel that it is good to be here—that it is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven. The electric spark of invisible love will kindle a flame of love in you. Your soul will be secretly drawn by an irresistible heavenly attraction to Christ who dwells in every believing heart the hope of glory. And as you sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, worship in the beauty of holiness, and partake of the droppings of the sanctuary with great delight,

you shall have a song of praise and thanksgiving put into your mouth "as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart as when one goeth with a pipe to come unto the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of Israel."

Yes! I believe her glorious still within
With beauty undiscerned by mortal eye,
Yet seen of Heaven. Her glories shall begin
To come serenely forth, when earth and sky,
Like morning mists which shroud her, shall pass by;
Then like the radiant sun on either hand,
With beauty clothed and immortality,
She shall break brightly forth at God's command,
And filling earth and heaven, a living temple stand.

When I study, says one, the existence, the origin, the moral significance, the sublimity and the destiny of the Christian Church, I am overwhelmed with astonishment and grief at the lamentably inadequate and perverted opinions which prevail respecting it. Ecclesiastical hierarchies, doctrinal sects, religious fraternities—and do *these* comprise all that is meant by the Church? A State Establishment, a Dissenting Body, a Methodistic Society, a Presbyterian denomination—does the meaning of these expressions terminate with the things

they respectively designate? No, verily! There is a great thing among men, and they know it not; a wonder unwondered at,—a glory unnoticed! Is it generally known that a great problem is being solved by Infinite Wisdom; and that earth, in the first instance, and heaven, shortly, are the scenes of its solution? Have men, in any considerable numbers, recognized the fact, that a process of inconceivable sublimity is going on every day in the market-place, the streets, the fields, the houses, and the huts of this world? —that the Creator of the visible is forming, without rest or intermission, an invisible temple of living stones, which, when completed, shall be exhibited before the universe, as the most gorgeous and costly of all His possessions?—that heaven has really come down to earth, and brought into sympathy with its plans and purposes myriads of the human family, who are every day journeying to the city not made with hands, and growing in the likeness of Him who is the Head of all principality and power, and the Sovereign of life? —that, amidst the thorns and thistles of earth's deserts, grow flowers which are lovingly tended

by angels, watered by the river of life, and destined to be transplanted to the garden of the Lord?—and that among those whom the world despises, as it did their Prince, are to be found men who shall ere long be acknowledged by angels as the sons and heirs of God? Is this known? Are these things considered when the word "Church" glides from the tongue? The street-passenger sees men going to some building consecrated to religious purposes, on the morning of the Lord's day. Does he think what that procession means? Is there not a hidden significance, a veiled glory, which will not burst upon his mental vision without the labor of trying to uncover it? May not that procession point to eternity, and signify the power of the invisible? Assume, for the sake of illustration, that the proper motives animate the travellers,—that they know wherefore they are moving thither,—that they understand the ultimate object of the holy convocation,—that they feel the solemnity of their profession,—and that they devoutly wish for the great things involved in their voluntary avowal of attachment to the

Invisible King; and then, if asked by the passenger to explain all, what would they say? A correct answer would startle the querist, and very probably themselves; and a complete answer would convince him that his wisdom would be to go with them, and lead all to spend a day of rapt enjoyment and of exciting joy in the anticipation of the future.

How much there is to think about, and how strong the calls to thought, when the idea of a Christian Church rises before the mind? Originating before the world was streaming along the lines of all history, and pointing to perfection and duration when the world shall flee away, and no place be found for it, the Christian Church really challenges the study of all thinkers.

It is either an unprecedented imposture or a magnificent embodiment of divine love and wisdom. A thousand reasons prove that it cannot be the former: ten thousand demonstrate that it is the latter. In its constitution, spirit, purpose, and destiny, it is altogether a divine thing. In this earth it is a visitant for whom heaven longs as a resident.

Thus have I often seen a vernal rose,
Which midst the lowering storm untouched appears,
Though hostile lances all around her close:
Still o'er the palisade of armed spears,
Her loveliness unharmed its beauty rears,
And day by day expanding drinks the shower.
E'en so unfolding to the eternal years,
The church discloses her ethereal flower,
The many-folded Heavens of her unfading bower.

All things which here are cast in beauty's mould,
Awful or fair, of soul entrancing power,
Speak but the things of her celestial fold.
Heart-stirring love in youth's first blooming hour,
Gazing intense on beauty's short-lived flower,
Speaks but the love of that immortal bride,
And beauty, which is her immortal dower.
Riches speak treasures which with her abide,
And fame, the unerring praise which God sets by her side.

The gems in oceans breast and living spars
Deep hid in earth's dark bowels far below,
Shall pave her wondrous pathway to the stars:
The fairest hues on eve, or morning's brow
The emblem of her covenantal sign:
Birds' songs or angels' voices, as they go
Bearing their aid to weary souls that pine;—
All blessings are but streams from her life-giving shrine.

CHAPTER XII.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

Love resembles, in many points, the free, circumambient atmosphere, with its light and air. It is diffusive, and will not be confined. Pent up, it becomes foul and putrid, and laden with malaria, carries with it the seeds of death. Its life, purity and healthfulness depend upon its free and unrestrained circulation. It is while it thus circles about; now the fitful air playing with the leaves and curling the tassels of the flowers; anon, the gentle breeze fanning the aching, fevered brow; at another time, the stronger wind speeding the vessel to the desired haven; and again, when needful to prevent the accumulation of morbid vapors and restore the proper equilibrium and due proportions of the atmosphere, the gale, the tempest or the tornado;—it is, I say, while thus free and diffusive that the air is pure, and that gathering fragrance and perfume from every garden,

it imparts life and joy to every living creature. And such also is Christian love. Coming down from above, it cannot be confined to individuals, homes, sanctuaries or denominations. It is Christian and Catholic. As there "is a common salvation," and "a like faith," and "one hope," and "good tidings for all people"—so are all Christians "one in Christ Jesus," "one fold under one Shepherd." Now of this "unity in the Spirit," the bond is love. Loving Him that begat, we cannot but love all that are begotten of Him. Just as love to a friend will create love to his children, and love to the children love to the friend, so is it with every one that is born of the Spirit. Love to Christ pants with love to Christ's followers, and goes out in desires, and yearnings, and efforts for the happiness of all that are of "the household of faith," and returns from its labors of love, like the vapors of oceans to increase and purify itself. It cannot rest. It cannot dwell apart. It cannot remain in the isolated bosom. If it does, it becomes sour, selfish, morbid, gloomy, censorious, bitter, bigoted, hateful and uncharitable,—the poisonous atmosphere of spiritual malignity and death. It is

only while it is living and pure, it continues hearty, healthful and happy. Christian-love remains LOVE—only when it is open, free and diffusive, embracing in its arms of charity, and in its breast of tenderness confidence and affection, all that call on the name of the Lord Jesus, both theirs and ours.

The rain that cometh down from heaven is another natural emblem of this spiritual grace of Christian love. Sinking into the heart, it springs up in ever fresh and living water, which as necessarily seeks free course, that it may run and be glorified. Pent up in selfish sanctity, walled around by sectarian jealousy, closed up by the huge stone of besotted fanaticism and one eyed, leering, canting hypocrisy —this spring-well of charity becomes a filthy stagnant pool breeding vermin and disease; covered over with the putrid slime of decay; an abomination in the sight of God; and a stink in the nostrils of men. Let Christian love then run. Take away the stone from the well. All our springs are in God, the unfailing fountain of the water of life, which never can be exhausted. Let it then flow freely. See how clear it bubbles up, impregnated with

the vital breath of its native heavens! How it sings and smiles as it rolls along in the sunshine and through the green pastures, like limpid streams,

> Through life's green vale in beauty gliding,
> Now 'neath the gloom of willows hiding,
> Now glancing o'er the turf away,
> In playful waves and glittering spray.

Behold every plant of righteousness, how it laughs in merry gladness with the fresh buoyant life imparted to it. Every leaf glitters with pearly drops, and exhales sweet odor. Every tint of every flower seems to be fresh painted, and every tree to be brightened with a new enamel; and as we walk forth amid this garden of the Lord, how does it give forth a sweet smell, exhaling that fragrance which is the celestial product of a divinely imparted love! Yes! love is twice blessed in blessing others, and as it runs on, gathering to itself every particle of divine life, and swelling its volume, it receives life with love, and conveys both to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people through whose boundaries it passes along, until the accumulated waters at last

mingle and lose themselves in "seas of heavenly rest."

"If I can pluck souls from the clutches of the devil," said Bunyan, "I care not where they go to be built up in their holy faith." And so say I to you, gentle reader. That man has never known the heart of Jesus, and felt its throbbings beat responsive to His own, whose Christian love and charity go no farther than his own church. The divisions of the earth, with all the evils incident to them—and they are legion—are of God and not of man. Man would obliterate and destroy them, and concentrate all in one great Babel of discord, confusion, despotism and terror. But God confounds all such schemes, and blasts all such unions, and overwhelms all such Babels in destruction. And as all the natural divisions of the earth are a wise and providential adaptation to the present natural character and condition of men, so are also the divisions of the church. "There must be heresies," divisions, sects, various and even erroneous opinions and practices. These are evils, gigantic evils, and give occasion to all manner of offences. But they are necessary. They must NEEDS

BE, "in order that they who are approved may be made manifest;" that the water of life may be prevented from stagnation; and in order that Christians may provoke one another to zeal and to love, to work miracles of mercy, and to perform mighty works, even though they follow not after their company. Why should we grieve and distress ourselves, if "Christ is preached even in a spirit of contention and hatred towards us?" The evil is theirs, not ours. Why should we judge another man's servants? To our Common Master they stand or fall. He "will try every man's work!" Yea, He will try every man's *spirit*, and render to every man as his work shall "be," whether it be the work of faith, and sound doctrine, and corresponding zeal—"whether it be gold or silver, or precious stones—or whether it be only hay, wood and stubble." Why then should the herdsmen of Lot, and those of Abraham, strive together, or Judah vex Ephraim and Ephraim Judah, seeing that there is room enough, and water enough, and work enough for all, and that when the day's labor is done, there will be an evening's rest and recompense for all from Him who "judgeth righteously, and in whose Father's house there are many mansions."

The longer I live, the larger does my heart grow towards Christians, the wider becomes the circumference of my charity, and the less selfish and jealous is my love towards brethren. In looking round on Methodists with their seraph Wesley; or on Lutherans with their lion hearted Luther; or on Calvinists with their Calvin,—cold it may be, but firm, faithful and lofty as the mountains round about his own Geneva, visible, like them from afar, and like them modifying the temperature of the wide world and sending forth streams into all lands;—or whether I look upon the Reformed with their Zuingle; or upon the Moravians with their Zinzendorf; or on the Baptists with their Foster, Hall, and other worthies; or on the Episcopalians with their great cloud of high and holy men—faithful witnesses and martyrs to the truth; or on the Congregationalists with their Pilgrim Fathers; or upon any of the other Evangelical denominations; I can rejoice and give God thanks, that with different forms of godliness, they have all the power; that with different rites, they have all the substance; that with various orders, they have one great High Priest, the true minister of the sanctuary; that with various dialects, they have one

heavenly language; that with different ecclesiastical circles, they have one Bible, the magnetic centre of them all; that with various uniforms, they have one captain of salvation; and that as one sacramental host of God's elect, they are all waging warfare against the common enemy, and fighting the good fight of faith. And when I look on our great Catholic, Christian, Evangelical, National Societies—the Bible, the Tract, and the Sunday-school Unions—I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice, when I behold such marvellous manifestation of the truth that amid all their diversity of administrations, these various denominations have one Lord; and that amid all their tendencies to sectarian jealousy and distrust they are sweetly constrained by divine grace whereto they have attained of the faith and charity of the gospel, to walk by the same rule and to mind the same thing.

These Associations are living demonstrations that amid all their variety of external forms, and observances, and amidst even their distinct and opposite opinions, all evangelical denominations cherish great principles and corresponding practices which are in themselves power-

fully attractive, and an adequate basis for mutual and respectful love. And to whatever extent full visible communion may be considered inexpedient or improper, there may, or there ought to be exhibited a spiritual oneness and fellowship in the faith and love of Christ; in the practical design and tendency of Christian doctrine; and in the final hope, through grace, of eternal life. Oh, yes! faith working through love, will bind all the living stones in the spiritual building with the purest and most adhesive cement of inviolable friendship till the whole building is completed, and all are united together in one heavenly temple in Christ Jesus. Then the many tongues of earth shall give place to the one heavenly language, in which all who love the Lord Jesus Christ shall praise Him with harmonious voice. Church of Christ, how shall I speak thy coming praise and praise thy full-blown beauty?

Fair as heaven's doors, which, made of varied stone,
Yet mingling, form one glory all their own;
Sisters of glorious birth, though varied each,
Each lovely; and their mien, and form, and speech,
Mark all one family; all blend in one—
Their hues combining in one light divine.

Thus in my musings all together shine
In one harmonious whole, and ever seem
Passing from form to form, as in a dream,
Till all is lost in one, in beauty seen,
Centred in light, one heaven-descended queen.

These voluntary associations of all evangelical Christians for the advancement of the common salvation, are therefore the fruits, the evidence, and the developments of Christian love,—only, however, as I earnestly hope and pray, the first fruits of a coming harvest—and of this love, in all its manifestations, the Lord's Supper is at once the bond, the signal, the sign and the seal.

There is but one communion, as there is but one Lord. There can, therefore, be but one true church, whose centre is Christ, whose circumference is eternity past and to come, and whose radii are the innumerable company of souls attracted within that circle, and enlivened and enlightened by its heavenly power. Deriving from Christ life and energy, imbued by Him with common sympathies, motives and aim, all Christians should of necessity be actuated by a common activity, terminating in a common work. We are laborers together with God. We are

co-workers and helpers in the Gospel. We are the body of Christ, and every one members in particular, fitly joined together and supported by that which every joint supplieth. To every one is given a talent. Every one occupies a place in the vineyard, and has a gift, and a field for which he is accountable. The church is thus "the Arm of the Lord;" "the power of God unto Salvation;" "the pillar and ground of the truth;" the almoner of God's mercy.

Now just as every individual Christian has his particular sphere, calling and work, so has every church and every denomination theirs, and so has also the whole body,—the church visible and Catholic—its own peculiar work And as the work of every individual Christian interferes not, but prepares for, and disposes to, and actually merges in, his work as a member of the church; so is it also with the work and duty of churches and denominations.

These several works also do not prevent, but only "prepare the way of the Lord" in His larger field, which is the world. The works of righteousness and labors of love which devolve upon the whole Christian church, are in regions

beyond the boundaries of local churches—in the waste places of Zion—in the unbroken fallow ground, and in the yet uncleared wilderness. These labors therefore are the developments of Christian love uniting in common activities for the removal of common obstacles; and for the erection of a common highway for the more rapid progress and prosperity of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Such labors are to the church what respiration is to the body, something external to its component members, implying their healthful existence, dependent upon them, and yet distinct and outside of them. And as there are some four millions of invisible pores in the body these may well respresent the general agencies and activities of the church, whose office it is to labor for the common good of all. And as in the body the closing of these pores excites morbid action in all the separate members and functions of the body, leading to dullness, disease and even death, while their free and harmonious co-operation enables each separate member to carry on securely and healthfully its own functions, so also in like manner is this general, united co-operation of

Christians essential to the peace, purity, unity and prosperity of the every particular denomination, church, and Christian, while its partial existence or imperfect operation is the evidence, the effect, and the re-active cause of coldness inactivity and spiritual languor, disease and death.

Or to vary the illustration, "Ye," that is the church, "are (says Christ) the light of the world." Now take a ray of light and examine it, and it seems to be a simple, uncompounded brilliant light. But if you subject that light to the prism, you find that instead of one color, there are in it not less than seven, and that it is the result of the action of violet, indigo, green, blue, yellow and green colours, not one of them being white. Now so it is with every individual Christian church and denomination. They are found to be made up of the most various, and apparently, conflicting materials, none of which to the unspiritual eye of the unbeliever, appear to be "pure and undefiled religion." But when these are united together into one by Him who created the light out of darkness and who hath shined into their hearts, they appear "clear as the Sun and fair as the

Moon." We find, also, that by arranging these several colors in their natural order upon a wheel, and imparting to it motion, we actually produce the pure white brilliant light. And so is it when Christians of various denominations are brought to act together as a wheel in the chariot of the Gospel, that losing all individual peculiarities, they combine so as to present to the eyes of God, of angels, and of men, a glorious light, the glory of the Lord being arisen upon them.

Such is the mystic, mighty and transforming power of Christian love—of that communion of Saints, of which the Lord's Supper is the sign, the seal, the pledge, the obligation, the evidence, and the actual manifestation.

Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul the Communion of Saints,
To find at Christ's banquet for all there is room,
Who find in the presence of Jesus a home!
Sweet bond that unites all the children of peace,
Pledge of conquest in arms, and from all troubles release.

As there is but one Lord so is there but one Supper, and one death showed forth in it. All Christians are branches, but they are all united to Christ, and derive their life from the one vine.

All Christians are members of that one body, of which Christ is the head. All Christians are children, and the children too of the one Father and of one mother, "the mother of us all." All Christians, therefore, participate in the Lord's Supper at one board, of one bread and one wine. The Lord's Supper is thus to Christians what it is to Christianity. It is like the tabernacle in the midst of the surrounding tribes, binding them together through all the wilderness, notwithstanding all their tribal distinctions, and their separate encampments. It is what the Temple and the great feasts at Jerusalem were amid the territorial divisions of the Israelites in Canaan. It is what Mount Zion was among the other hills of Judea. It is the fold where the various flocks of the common herd, however scattered up and down over the mountains and the valleys, are gathered home at twilight to meet together under the loving care of the good Shepherd. It is the Father's house where the children of its many mansions are collected to the evening meal, and eat bread, and drink wine with one another at this Supper of the Lord spread for them in His Father's house. It is the banner

of salvation, given because of the truth, to the army of the living God, waving triumphantly over the collected forces as they here meet in review before their common leader—the captain of the Lord's host, the angel of the covenant, the deliverer and commander of the people,—that under it they may swear fresh fealty to Him, and be inspired with fresh loyalty and ardour to go forth again into all the world, and contend earnestly for the faith, until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Yes, the Lord's Supper is the King's tent, amid the surrounding tents, where every good soldier of Christ, as he passes by, receives a pledge of His favor, a badge of honor, a word in season, a new heart and a right spirit, that again forming in the ranks of war, he may fight manfully the good fight of faith, knowing that henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give, and not to him only, but to every one who has been faithful unto death!

Communion of Saints! how sweet the sound to a believer's ear! Here we feel that however separated as living stones and different

compartments, we are one temple of the Holy Ghost—no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

The Lord's Supper is, therefore, "the bond of perfectness;" "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" the avowal to the world that under all the variations of its forms, government and order, there is but "one church of God, which He purchased with His own blood," "one Lord" over it, "one faith" animating it, "one baptism" of the Spirit—not outward in the flesh, but "the washing, of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"—one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all; and that while "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, it is the same Spirit who worketh in them all severally as He wills.

The love of God shed abroad in their heart by the Holy Ghost, the love of Christ constraining them, and the love of the Spirit working in them love to one another, is therefore the very essence of Christian life, "the Christian's vital breath," the brightest evidence of his being born of God and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, and the earnest of his inheritance among the saints in light.

In descending the Upper Nile, says a recent traveller, the Arab boatmen called out "Engalesee, Engalesee." This was responded to by a similar cry from an ascending boat. It was understood that there was an "Englishman" on board of each. With no other knowledge than this, both directed their boats to the shore for a meeting. Each was alone, and it was a joy to meet one under these circumstances who could even speak the same language.

This Englishman, however, might be an illiterate boor. But, no, he proved to be a man of education and refinement, a graduate of Cambridge. But he might still be an infidel or ungodly, with whom one could only make a few inquiries about worldly things, and pass on to become strangers as much as before. On the

contrary, he proves to be a Christian. But he might be in pursuit of the world or of pleasure. But no, he was a minister of the Gospel, in pursuit of strength to work for his Lord. But still he might entertain those views of religion itself, which would constitute a barrier to the fullest communion of souls. But no, there was no difference in this last, and highest, and sweetest of all respects. A more congenial spirit could not have been found in any land. What a meeting! In a few minutes we were one. Vast oceans rolled between us and everything loved on earth. We were separated by five hundred miles from the nearest individual that bore even the *name* of Christian, with boundless deserts on either side, with the exception of the narrow valley which stood before us,

"Dressed in living green."

The unintelligible gutturals of the Arabs, to whom time was little and eternity less, gradually ceased as they fell to sleep on the sand, and we were left to full communion of soul, seeming to find our God and Saviour nearer in this far-off land. But this meeting was brief. A few hours, and we parted, to see each other's

faces no more until the great Judgment Day. But even here was there in brief, the image and resemblance of a future and eternal and perfect communion in Christ; where the redeemed of all ages, countries, and nations shall meet, to enjoy the full realization of that of which so many have sung, in "The voice of free grace,"—

> "We'll range the blest fields on the banks of the river,
> And sing of salvation forever and ever."

"The Communion of Saints" is, therefore, a fundamental article of the Christian faith, and embodied in its earliest creeds, as it was exemplified in the loving character and self-denying acts of its primitive disciples, and it is not less essential now. It is now and always was made imperative, and forced upon the conscience and heart of Christians by the showing forth in the communion of a common Saviour; the Lord, both of the living and the dead;—by "the Lord's death till He come."

"The whole family in heaven and earth!" The difference betwixt us and them, says Bunyan, is, not that we are really two, but one body in Christ, in divers places. True, we are

below stairs, and they above; they in their holiday, and we in our working-day clothes; they in harbor, but we in the storm; they at rest, but we in the wilderness; they singing, as crowned with joy, we crying, as crowned with thorns. But we are all of one house, one family, and are all the children of one Father.

Precious! most precious doctrine! Precious alike to the living and the dead, and equally as it regards our friends living, dying, and when they have "gone before."

Come let us join our friends above,
That have obtained the prize;
And on the eagle wings of love,
To joy celestial rise.

Let saints below his praises sing,
With those to glory gone;
For all the servants of our King,
In heaven and earth, are one

One family, we dwell in Him,
One church above, beneath:
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.

One army of the living God,
To his commands we bow;
Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.

"But do I believe this in the heavenly import of this blessed doctrine, in its full, rich clustering of spiritual affections? The communion of saints! What is it? Not the acceptance of that faith which the saints in common profess. Not the communion of my own parish, or of any church or party. All these may be found where the communion of saints is not.

"The illustration introduced above, is a *faint* emblem of the communion of saints, but scarce a resemblance. We are fellow-pilgrims in the rough and difficult path to the Celestial City. Polluted alike with sin, and harassed with infirmities; differing in a thousand minor things, but with one strong common purpose to tread the same road, to follow the same Leader, and to reach the same goal. The road is conflict, the leader is Christ, and the goal is Heaven. Churches are important only as they advance our onward progress, and our oneness with Him who purchased us with His own blood. The fact, then, that we are *Christians* in the deep spiritual meaning of the term, forms a bond too strong, too pure, too enduring to be appreciated by any but those who can say, with the conviction and fervor of Thomas, 'My Lord and my

God.' Differing, as we may, in many things, we are one in Christ, our righteousness and our trust. One in our daily experience and our spiritual aspirations. One in our fears and weakness, one in our strength and ultimate triumph. One in our final song, 'WORTHY THE LAMB.' Oh, let this communion, this sharing of the dearest interests, the sharpest conflicts, and the noblest of all victories, be to us a foretaste of that unbroken communion in Heaven, where sin, infirmity, and conflicting interests can never enter. And when we come to the Lord's table to renew our visible covenant with Him, and to seal our union with each other by eating together, let us go forth into the world with this communion so manifest in our affectionate intercourse and charitable forbearance, that men shall say once again, 'See how these Christians love one another.'—Would not Satan tremble then? *His* followers love not one another."*

* It is with great pleasure, and with more than willingness, I adopt these Catholic sentiments from the Parrish Visitor, the able organ of the Evangelical Knowledge Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

Here then, dear reader, I leave you. I have not intended, nor endeavored to provide for you a systematic or didactic treatise on the church and the Lord's Supper. I have rather designed to enter into personal conversation with you, and talk with you as a friend talketh with his friend, face to face. There are yet many things of which, were we together, I might still speak, touching the King and His beauty, for if all were told, the world could not contain the books that should be written. You see, however, how large a letter I have written unto you, with mine own hand, out of my heart of hearts, and with earnest prayers, that you may be united by a true and loving faith to Christ and His church on earth, and that having served Him long, faithfully, and successfully here on earth, "and well earned a grave," and a grave's hallowed rest, you may come unto

Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel."

May it be so with you, dear reader. Fare thee well. Adieu. I will still commend you to God, and to the power of His grace, and to the ever-present, all-sustaining, all-sufficient Comforter; and my last wish for you is, that your last communion and your dying consolation may be as blessed as those of the young female disciple with whose testimony I will conclude.

She had been an invalid for several months, and her last illness was attended by much physical suffering, which she endured patiently, and with submission to the Divine will. A short time previous to her death, on being interrogated in regard to the state of her mind and her future prospects, she exclaimed,—"Bright—all bright and glorious—Jesus is

precious—He will keep that which I have committed to his hand."

On another occasion, she remarked, "I have now been confined to my room three months, and although wasted by disease, amid all my suffering, I have found Christ precious. I am ready and willing to go to my heavenly Father —yea, I long to be gone to that happy land where all God's people will have done with sin and sorrow. I have had to-day bright views of my Saviour. I have longed to break from this tenement of clay, and soar to my Saviour's loving arms. Each day I see more and more of my unworthiness. Satan is near with his devices; but Christ is also near to guard and guide me home to the heavenly Canaan."

A week previous to her decease, she thus wrote: "To-day I was permitted to commemorate the love of Christ at his table; and although suffering acutely, yet in meditating on *His* last sufferings, and *why* He suffered, my pains seemed lighter. Thanks to my precious Saviour, for his presence, and for patience to bear up under my afflictions. Precious Saviour—a few more hours—" Here her pen ceased, and in one week her sanctified spirit, we trust, was

with her Redeemer, and with the spirits of the just made perfect, whose names are written in heaven.

An interview with her father, and which proved to be her last, was of a most affecting character. It was indeed overwhelming to his manly frame, and the gushing tears evinced the depth of his emotion. Fixing steadfastly her languid eye upon him, she most impressively charged him to meet her in heaven. This solemn charge, falling from the lips of his dying child, sunk like lead into his agonized soul, and there, over his loved one, almost in the embrace of death, he solemnly vowed to the Lord, that he would strive to meet her in a better world.

Dear reader, let you and I also go to Jesus, that living we may be His, and that dying we may die the death of the righteous, and our last end be peace.

And oh! may you and I meet in heaven, and there sit down together with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Amen and Amen.

"MAKE HASTE, MY BELOVED."

Song viii. 14.

Pass away, earthly joy,
Jesus is mine!
Break every mortal tie,
Jesus is mine!
Dark is the wilderness;
Distant the resting-place;
Jesus alone can bless:—
Jesus is mine!

Tempt not my soul away,
Jesus is mine!
Here would I ever stay,
Jesus is mine!
Perishing things of clay,
Born but for one brief day,
Pass from my heart away,—
Jesus is mine!

Fare ye well, dreams of night,
Jesus is mine!
Mine is a dawning bright,
Jesus is mine!
All that my soul has tried,
Left but a dismal void,
Jesus has satisfied,—
Jesus is mine!

Farewell, mortality,
Jesus is mine!
Welcome, eternity,
Jesus is mine!

Welcome, ye scenes of rest,
Welcome, ye mansions blest,
Welcome, a Saviour's breast,—
Jesus is mine!

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will; working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.

THE END.

Mar 30, 1857.

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